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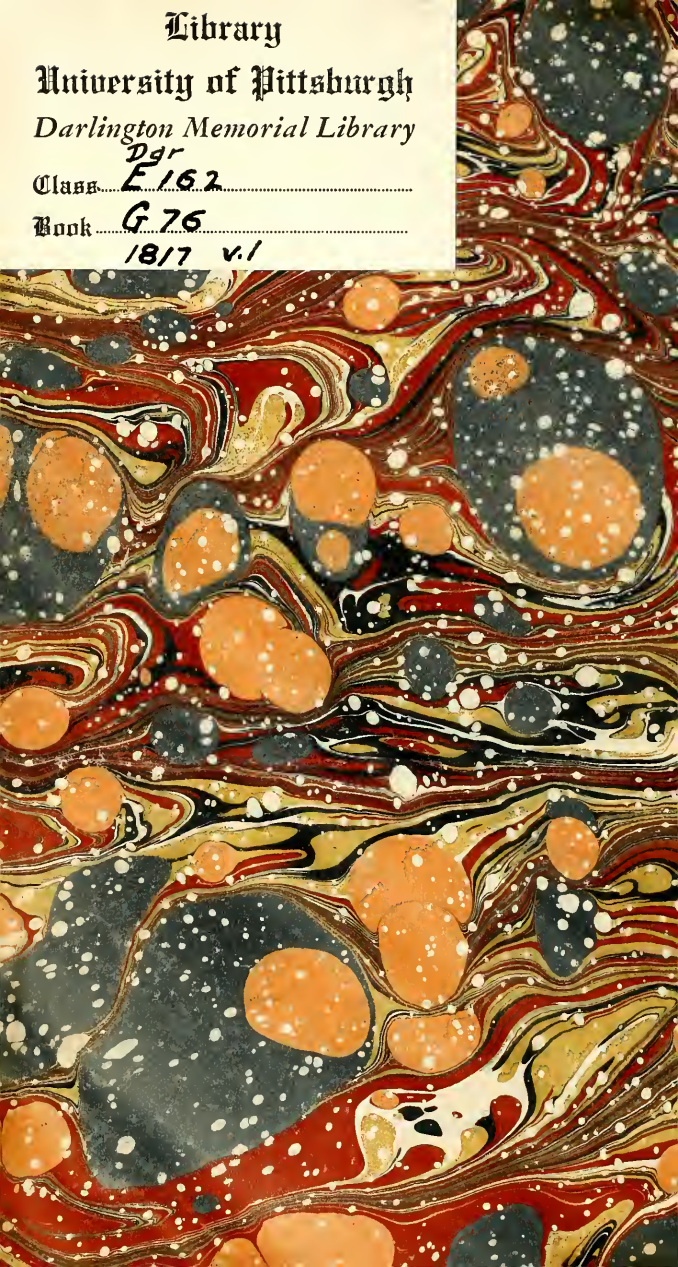

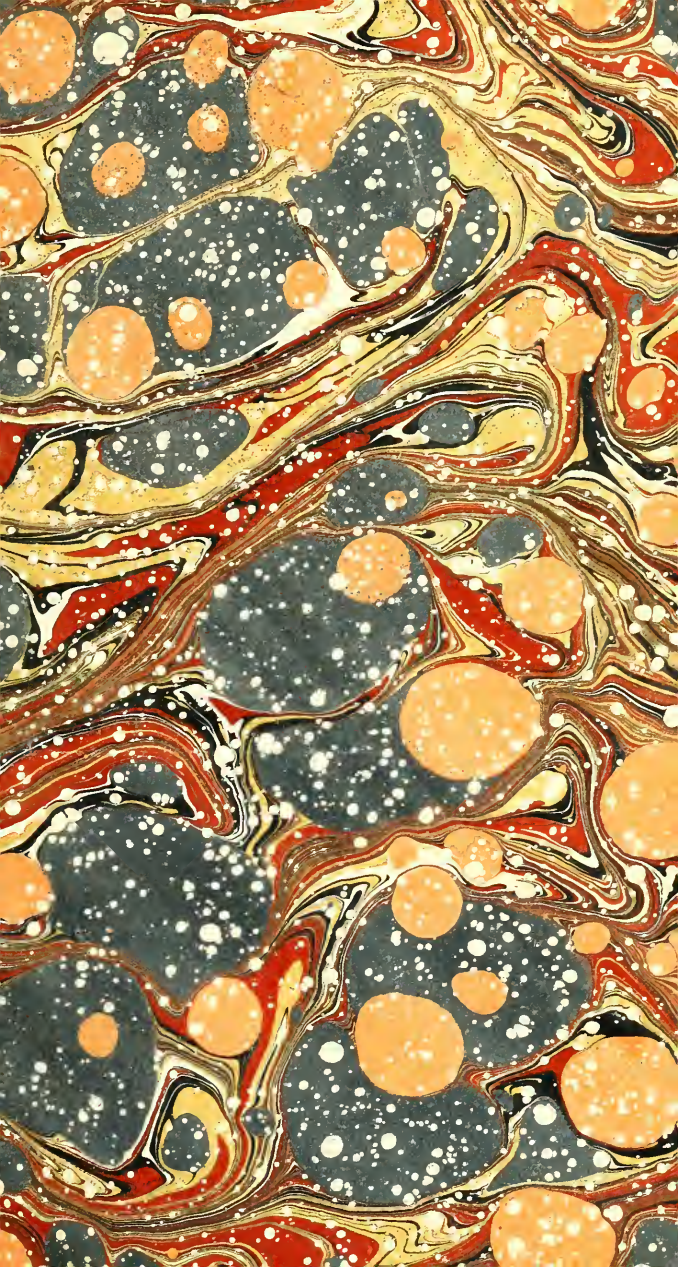

Read Dear Sir

Mr Fletcher Professor of Botany
& his friend Mr Greville will
deliver this note to you which
having from an old & early friend
will be a sufficient passport to
insure your civility in directing
them on their way to the Pownalboro
road. Yr John Dear Sir

Yours very truly

Anne Grant

161 Princes Street
June 25th 1822

Leonard by Mr Hooker

Revd Thomas Ross

Kilmannock

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MEMOIRS

OF

AN AMERICAN LADY.

Grant, Mrs. Anne (MacVicar)
1755-1838

MEMOIRS

OF

AN AMERICAN LADY;

WITH

SKETCHES OF MANNERS AND SCENERY

IN AMERICA,

AS THEY EXISTED PREVIOUS TO THE REVOLUTION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

By the AUTHOR of

"LETTERS FROM THE MOUNTAINS," &c. &c.

VOL. I.

THIRD EDITION.

London:

PRINTED FOR

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THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

SIR WILLIAM GRANT, KNT.

MASTER OF THE ROLLS.

SIR,

IT is very probable that the friends, by whose solicitations I was induced to arrange in the following pages my early recollections, studied more the amusement I should derive from executing this task, than any pleasure they could expect from its completion.

The principal object of this work is to record the few incidents, and the many virtues, which diversified and dis-

distinguished the life of a most valued friend. Though no manners could be more simple, no notions more primitive, than those which prevailed among her associates, the stamp of originality with which they were marked, and the peculiar circumstances in which they stood, both with regard to my friend, and the infant society to which they belonged, will, I flatter myself, give an interest with reflecting minds, even to this desultory narrative, and the miscellany of description, observation, and detail, which it involves.

If truth, both of feeling and narration, which are its only merits, prove a sufficient counterbalance to

care-

carelessness, laxity, and incoherence of style, its prominent faults, I may venture to invite you, when you unbend from the useful and honourable labours to which your valuable time is devoted, to trace this feeble delineation of an excellent, though unembellished character; and of the rapid pace with which an infant society has urged on its progress from virtuous simplicity, to the dangerous "knowledge of good and evil;" from tremulous imbecility to self-sufficient independence.

To be faithful, a delineation must necessarily be minute. Yet if this sketch, with all its imperfections, be honoured by your indulgent perusal, such

such condescension of time and talent must certainly be admired, and may perhaps be imitated by others.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,

Your faithful, humble servant,

THE AUTHOR.

London,
October, 1808.

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INTRO-

INTRODUCTION.

TO ————————.

DEAR SIR,

OTHERS as well as you have expressed a wish to see a memoir of my earliest and most valuable friend.

To gratify you and them I feel many inducements, and see many objections.

To comply with any wish of yours is one strong inducement.

To please myself with the recollection of past happiness and departed worth is another; and to benefit those into whose hands this imperfect sketch may fall, is a third. For, the authentic record of an exemplary life, though delivered in the most

unadorned manner, and even degraded by poverty of style, or uncouthness of narration, has an attraction for the uncorrupted mind.

It is the rare lot of some exalted characters, by the united power of virtues and of talents, to soar above their fellow-mortals, and leave a luminous track behind, on which successive ages gaze with wonder and delight.

But the sweet influence of the benign stars that now and then enlighten the page of history, is partial and unfrequent.

They to whom the most important parts on the stage of life are allotted, if possessed of abilities undirected by virtue; are too often

"Wise to no purpose, artful to no end,"

that is really good and desirable.

They, again, in whom virtue is not supported by wisdom, are often, with the best intentions, made subservient to the short-sighted craft of the artful and designing. Hence, though we may be at times dazzled with the blaze of heroic atchievement, or contem-

contemplate with a purer satisfaction those "awful fathers of mankind," by whom nations were civilized, equitable dominion established, or liberty restored; yet, after all, the crimes and miseries of mankind form such prominent features of the history of every country, that humanity sickens at the retrospect, and misanthropy finds an excuse amidst the laurels of the hero, and the deep-laid schemes of the politician:

> "And yet this partial view of things
> "Is surely not the best." BURNS.

Where shall we seek an antidote to the chilling gloom left on the mind by these bustling intricate scenes, where the best characters, goaded on by furious factions or dire necessity, become involved in crimes that their souls abhor?

It is the contemplation of the peaceful virtues in the genial atmosphere of private life, that can best reconcile us to our nature, and quiet the turbulent emotions excited by

> "The madness of the crowd."

But vice, folly, and vanity are so noisy, so restless, so ready to rush into public view, and so adapted to afford food for malevolent curiosity, that the still small voice of virtue, active in its own sphere, but unwilling to quit it, is drowned in their tumult. This is a remedy, however,

" Not obvious, not obtrusive."

If we would counteract the baleful influence of public vice by the contemplation of private worth, we must penetrate into its retreats, and not be deterred from attending to its simple details by the want of that glare and bustle with which a fictitious or artificial character is generally surrounded.

But in this wide field of speculation one might wander out of sight of the original subject. Let me then resume it, and return to my objections. Of these the first and greatest is the dread of being inaccurate. Embellished facts, a mixture of truth and fiction, or, what we sometimes meet with,

with, a fictitious superstructure built on a foundation of reality, would be detestable on the score of bad taste, though no moral sense were concerned or consulted. 'Tis walking on a river half frozen, that betrays your footing every moment. By these repulsive artifices no person of real discernment is for a moment imposed upon. You do not know exactly which part of the narrative is false; but you are sure it is not all true, and therefore distrust what is genuine, where it occurs. For this reason a fiction, happily told, takes a greater hold of the mind than a narrative of facts, evidently embellished and interwoven with inventions.

I do not mean to discredit my own veracity. I certainly have no intention to relate any thing that is not true. Yet in the dim distance of near forty years, unassisted by written memorials, shall I not mistake dates, misplace facts, and omit circumstances which form essential links in the chain of narration? Thirty years ago, when I expressed a wish to do what I am now about to at-

tempt, how differently should I have executed it. A warm heart, a vivid imagination, and a tenacious memory, were then all filled with a theme which I could not touch without kindling into an enthusiasm, sacred at once to virtue and to friendship. Venerated friend of my youth, my guide, and my instructress! are then the dregs of an enfeebled mind, the worn affections of a wounded heart, the imperfect efforts of a decaying memory, all that remain to consecrate thy remembrance, to make known thy worth, and to lay on thy tomb the offering of gratitude?

My friend's life, besides being mostly passed in unruffled peace and prosperity, affords few of those vicissitudes which astonish and amuse. It is from her relations to those with whom her active benevolence connected her, that the chief interest of her story (if story it may be called) arises. It includes that of many persons, obscure indeed but for the light which her regard and beneficence reflected upon them. Yet without those subordinate persons in the drama,

drama, the action of human life, especially such a life as hers, cannot be carried on. Those can neither appear with grace, nor be omitted with propriety. Then, remote and retired as her situation was, the variety of nations and characters, of tongues and of complexions, with which her public spirit and private benevolence connected her, might appear wonderful to those unacquainted with the country and the times in which she lived; without a pretty distinct view of which my narrative would be unintelligible. I must be excused too for dwelling at times, on the recollection of a state of society so peculiar, so utterly dissimilar to any other that I have heard or read of, that it exhibits human nature in a new aspect, and is so far an object of rational curiosity, as well as a kind of phænomenon in the history of colonization. I forewarn the reader not to look for lucid order in the narration, nor for intimate connection between its parts. I have no authorities to refer to, no coeval witnesses of facts to consult. In regard to

the companions of my youth, I sit like the "Voice of Cona," alone on the heath; and, like him too, must muse in silence, till at intervals the "Light of my soul arises," before I can call attention to "A tale of other times," in which several particulars relative to my friend's ancestry must necessarily be included.

CHAP. I.

Province of New York.—Origin of the Settlement at Albany.—Singular Possession held by the Patron —Account of his Tenants.

IT is well known that the Province of New York, anciently called Munhattoes by the Indians, was originally settled by a Dutch colony, which came from Holland, I think, in the time of Charles the Second. Finding the country to their liking, they were followed by others more wealthy and better informed. Indeed some of the early emigrants appear to have been people respectable both from their family and character. Of these the principal were the Cuylers, the Schuylers, the Renselaers, the Delancys, the Cortlandts, the Tinbrooks, and the Beckmans, who have all of them been since distinguished in the civil wars, either as persecuted loyalists or triumphant

phant patriots. I do not precisely recollect the motives assigned for the voluntary exile of persons who were evidently in circumstances that might admit of their living in comfort at home, but am apt to think that the early settlers were those who adhered to the interest of the Stadtholder's family, a party which, during the minority of King William, was almost persecuted by the high republicans. They who came over at a later period probably belonged to the party which opposed the Stadtholder, and which was then in its turn depressed. These persons afterwards distinguished themselves by an aversion, nearly amounting to antipathy, to the British army, and indeed to all the British colonists. Their notions were mean and contracted; their manners blunt and austere; and their habits sordid and parsimonious: As the settlement began to extend they retired, and formed new establishments, afterwards called Firkkill, Esopus, &c.

To the Schuylers, Cuylers, Delancys, Cortlandts and a few others, this description

tion did by no means apply. Yet they too bore about them the tokens of former affluence and respectability, such as family plate, portraits of their ancestors executed in a superior style, and great numbers of original paintings, some of which were much admired by acknowledged judges. Of these the subjects were generally taken from sacred history.

I do not recollect the exact time, but think it was during the last years of Charles the Second, that a settlement we then possessed at Surinam was exchanged for the extensive (indeed at that time boundless) province of Munhattoes, which, in compliment to the then heir apparent, was called New York. Of the explored part of that country, the most fertile and beautiful was situated far inland, on the banks of the Hudson's River. This copious and majestic stream is navigable 170 miles from its mouth for vessels of 60 or 70 tons burthen. Near the head of it, as a kind of barrier against the natives, and a central resort for traders, the foundation

was laid of a town called Oranienburgh, and afterwards by the British, Albany.

After the necessary precaution of erecting a small stockaded fort for security, a church was built in the centre of the intended town, which served in different respects as a kind of land-mark. A gentleman of the name of Renzelaer was considered as in a manner lord paramount of this city, a pre-eminence which his successor still enjoys, both with regard to the town and the lands adjacent. The original proprietor obtained from the High and Mighty States a grant of lands, which, from the church, extended twelve miles in every direction, forming a manor twenty-four Dutch miles in length, the same in breadth, including lands not only of the best quality of any in the province, but the the most happily situated for the purposes both of commerce and of agriculture. This great proprietor was looked up to as much as republicans in a new country could be supposed to look up to any one. He was called the Patroon, a designation tantamount

tamount to lord of the manor. Yet, in the distribution of these lands, the sturdy Belgian spirit of independence set limits to the power and profits of this lord of the forests, as he might then be called. None of these lands were either sold or alienated. The more wealthy settlers, as the Schuylers, Cuylers, &c. took very extensive leases of the fertile plains along the river, with boundless liberty of woods and pasturage, to the westward. The terms were, that the lease should hold while water runs and grass grows, and the landlord to receive the tenth sheaf of every kind of grain the ground produces. Thus ever accommodating the rent to the fertility of the soil, and changes of the seasons, you may suppose the tenants did not greatly fear a landlord, who could neither remove them, nor heighten their rents. Thus, without the pride of property, they had all the independence of proprietors. They were like German princes, who, after furnishing their contingent to the Emperor, might make war on him when they chose. Besides the profits (yearly augmenting)

augmenting) which the patron drew from his ample possessions, he held in his own hands an extensive and fruitful demesne. Yet preserving in a great measure the simple and frugal habits of his ancestors, his wealth was not an object of envy, nor a source of corruption to his fellow-citizens. To the northward of these bounds, and at the southern extremity also, the Schuylers and Cuylers held lands of their own. But the only other great landholders I remember, holding their land by those original tenures, were Philips and Cortlandt; their lands lay also on the Hudson's River, half way down to New York, and were denominated Philips' and Cortlandt's manors. At the time of the first settling of the country the Indians were numerous and powerful along all the river; but they consisted of wandering families, who, though they established some sort of local boundaries for distinguishing the hunting grounds of each tribe, could not be said to inhabit any place. The cool and crafty Dutch governors being unable to cope with them in arms, purchased from

from them the most valuable tracts for some petty consideration. They affected great friendship for them; and, while conscious of their own weakness, were careful not to provoke hostilities; and they, silently and insensibly, established themselves to the west.

CHAP II.

Account of the Five Nations, or Mohawk Indians.—Building of the Fort at Albany.—John and Philip Schuyler.

ON the Mohawk River, about forty miles distant from Albany, there subsisted a confederacy of Indian tribes, of a very different character from those mentioned in the preceding chapter; too sagacious to be deceived, and too powerful to be eradicated. These were the once renowned five nations, whom any one, who remembers them while they were a people, will hesitate to call savages. Were *they* savages who had fixed habitations; who cultivated rich fields; who built castles, (for so they called their not incommodious wooden houses, surrounded with palisadoes;) who planted maize and beans, and shewed considerable ingenuity in constructing and adorning their canoes,

canoes, arms, and clothing? They who had wise though unwritten laws, and conducted their wars, treaties, and alliances with deep and sound policy; they whose eloquence was bold, nervous, and animated; whose language was sonorous, musical, and expressive; who possessed generous and elevated sentiments, heroic fortitude, and unstained probity: Were these indeed savages? The difference

"Of scent the headlong lioness between
"And hound sagacious, on the tainted green,"

is not greater than that of the Mohawks in point of civility and capacity, from other American tribes, among whom, indeed, existed a far greater diversity of character, language, &c. than Europeans seem to be aware of. This little tribute to the memory of a people who have been, while it soothes the pensive recollections of the writer, is not so foreign to the subject as it may at first appear. So much of the peace and safety of the infant community depended on the friendship and alliance of

these

these generous tribes; and to conciliate and retain their affections so much address was necessary, that common characters were unequal to the task. Minds liberal and upright, like those I am about to describe, could alone excite that esteem, and preserve that confidence, which were essential towards retaining the friendship of those valuable allies.

From the time of the great rebellion, so many English refugees frequented Holland, that the language and manners of our country became familiar at the Hague, particularly among the Stadtholder's party. When the province of New York fell under the British dominion, it became necessary that every body should learn our language, as all public business was carried on in the English tongue, which they did the more willingly, as, after the revolution, the accession of the Stadtholder to the English crown very much reconciled them to our government. Still, however, the English was a kind of court language; little spoken, and imperfectly understood in the interior.

terior. Those who carried over with them the French and English languages soon acquired a sway over their less enlightened fellow-settlers. Of this number were the Schuylers and Cuylers, two families among whom intellect of the superior kind seemed an inheritance, and whose intelligence and liberality of mind, fortified by well-grounded principle, carried them far beyond the petty and narrow views of the rest. Habituated at home to centre all wisdom and all happiness in commercial advantages, they would have been very ill qualified to lay the foundation of an infant state in a country that afforded plenty and content, as the reward of industry, but where the very nature of the territory, as well as the state of society, precluded great pecuniary acquisitions. Their object here was to tame savage nature, and to make the boundless wild subservient to agricultural purposes. Commercial pursuits were a distant prospect; and before they became of consequence, rural habits had greatly changed the character of these republicans.

But

But the commercial spirit, inherent in all true Batavians, only slept to wake again, when the avidity of gain was called forth by the temptation of bartering for any lucrative commodity. The furs of the Indians gave this occasion, and were too soon made the object of the avidity of petty traders. To the infant settlement at Albany the consequences of this shortsighted policy might have proved fatal, had not these patriotic leaders, by their example and influence checked for a while such illiberal and dangerous practices. It is a fact singular and worth attending to, from the lesson it exhibits, that in all our distant colonies there is no other instance where a considerable town and prosperous settlement has arisen and flourished, in peace and safety, in the midst of nations disposed and often provoked to hostility, at a distance from the protection of ships, and from the only fortified city, which, always weakly garrisoned, was little fitted to awe and protect the whole province. Let it be remembered that the distance from New York to Albany is 170 miles;

miles; and that in the intermediate space, at the period of which I speak, there was not one town or fortified place. The shadow of a palisadoed fort*, which then existed at Albany, was occupied by a single independent company, who did duty, but were dispersed though the town, working at various trades: so scarce indeed were artizans in this community, that a tradesman might in these days ask any wages he chose.

To return to this settlement, which evidently owed its security to the wisdom of its leaders, who always acted on the simple maxim that honesty is the best policy; several miles north from Albany a considerable possession called the Flats, was inhabited by Colonel Philip Schuyler, one of the most enlightened men in the province. This being a frontier, he would have found it a very dangerous situation had he not

* It may be worth noting, that Captain Massey, who commanded this non-effectiye company for many years, was the father of Mrs. Lennox, an estimable character, well known for her literary productions, and for being the friend and protegée of Doctor Johnson.

been

been a person of singular worth, fortitude, and wisdom. If I were not afraid of tiring my reader with a detail of occurrences which, taking place before the birth of my friend might seem irrelevant to the present purpose, I could relate many instances almost incredible, of the power of mind displayed by this gentleman in governing the uninstructed, without coercion or legal right. He possessed this species of power in no common degree; his influence, with that of his brother John Schuyler, was exerted to conciliate the wandering tribes of Indians; and by fair traffic, for he too was a trader, and by fair liberal dealing, they attained their object. They also strengthened the league already formed with the five Mohawk nations, by procuring for them some assistance against their enemies, the Onondagoes of the Lakes.

Queen Anne had by this time succeeded the Stadtholder. The gigantic ambition of Lewis the Fourteenth actuated the remotest parts of his extensive dominions; and the encroaching spirit of that restless

nation

nation began to discover itself in hostilities to the infant colony. A motive for this could scarce be discovered, since they possessed already much more territory than they were able to occupy, the limits of which were undefined. But the province of New York was a frontier; and, as such, a kind of barrier to the southern colonies. It began also to compete for a share of the fur trade, then very considerable, before the beavers were driven back from their original haunts. In short, the province daily rose in importance; and being in a great measure protected by the Mohawk tribes, the policy of courting their alliance, and of impressing their minds with an exalted idea of the power and grandeur of the British empire, became obvious. I cannot recollect the name of the governor at this time; but whoever he was, he, as well as the succeeding ones, visited the settlement at Albany, to observe its wise regulations, and growing prosperity, and to learn maxims of sound policy from those whose interests and happiness were daily promoted by the practice of it.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Colonel Schuyler persuades four Sachems to accompany him to England.—Their Reception and Return.

IT was thought adviseable to send over some of the heads of the tribes to England to attach them to that country: but to persuade such of them as were intelligent, sagacious, and aware of all probable dangers; who were strangers to all the maritime concerns, and had never beheld the ocean; to persuade such independent and high-minded warriors to forsake the safety and enjoyments of their own country, to encounter the perils of a long voyage, and trust themselves among entire strangers, and this merely to bind closer an alliance with the sovereign of a distant country—a female sovereign too; a mode of government that must have appeared to them very incongruous; this was no common undertaking, nor was it easy

to

to induce these chiefs to accede to the proposal. The principal motive for urging it was, to counteract the machinations of the French, whose emissaries in these wild regions had even then begun to style us, in effect, a nation of shopkeepers; and to impress the tribes dwelling within their boundaries with vast ideas of the power and splendour of their Grand Monarque, while our sovereign, they said, ruled over a petty island, and was himself a trader. To counterwork such suggestions, it was thought requisite to give the leaders of the nation (who then in fact protected our people) an adequate idea of our power, and of the magnificence of our court. The chiefs at length consented, on this condition only, that their brother Philip, who never had been known to tell a lie, or to speak without thinking, should accompany them. However this gentleman's wisdom and integrity might qualify him for this employment, it by no means suited his placid temper, simple manners and habits of life, at once pastoral and patriarchal, to travel

over seas, visit courts, and mingle in the bustle of a world, the customs of which were become foreign to those primitive inhabitants of new and remote regions. The adventure, however, succeeded beyond his expectation; the chiefs were pleased with the attention paid them, and with the mild and gracious manners of the queen, who at different times admitted them to her presence. With the good Philip she had many conversations, and made him some valuable presents, among which, I think, was her picture; but this with many others was lost, in a manner which will appear hereafter. Colonel Schuyler too was much delighted with the courteous affability of this princess; she offered to knight him, which he respectfully, but positively refused: and being pressed to assign his reasons, he said he had brothers and near relations in humble circumstances, who, already his inferiors in property, would seem as it were depressed by his elevation: and though it should have no such effect on his mind, it might be the means

means of awakening pride or vanity in the female part of his family. He returned, however, in triumph, having completely succeeded in his mission. The kings, as they were called in England, came back in full health, deeply impressed with esteem and attachment for a country which to them appeared the centre of arts, intelligence, and wisdom; where they were treated with kindness and respect; and were neither made the objects of perpetual exhibition, nor hurried about and distracted with a succession of splendid, and to them incomprehensible sights, the quick shifting of which rather tends to harrass minds which have enough of native strength to reflect on what they see, without knowledge sufficient to comprehend it. It is to this childish and injudicious mode of treating those uncivilised beings, to this mode of rather extorting from them a tribute to our vanity, than of taking the necessary pains to inform and improve them, that the ill success of all subsequent experiments of this kind has been owing.

Instead of endeavouring to conciliate them by genuine kindness, and by gradually and gently unfolding to them simple and useful truths, our manner of treating them seems calculated to dazzle, oppress, and degrade them with a display of our superior luxuries and refinements: which, by the elevated and self denied Mohawk, would be regarded as unmanly and frivolous objects, and which the voluptuous and low minded Otaheitan would so far relish, that the privation would seem intolerable, when he returned to his hogs and his cocoas. Except such as have been previously inoculated, (a precaution which voyagers have rarely had the prudence or humanity to take, there is scarcely an instance of savages brought to Europe that have not died of the small pox; induced either by the infection to which they are exposed from the indiscriminate crowds drawn about them, or the alteration in their blood, which unusual diet, liquors, close air, and heated rooms, must necessarily produce.

The presents made to these adventurous warriors

warriors were judiciously adapted to their taste and customs. They consisted of shewy habits, of which all these people are very fond, and of arms made purposely in the form of those used in their own country. It was the fortune of the writer of these memoirs, more than thirty years after, to see that great warrior and faithful ally of the British crown, the redoubted King Hendrick, then sovereign of the five nations, splendidly arrayed in a suit of light blue, made in an antique mode, and trimmed with broad silver lace; which was probably an heir-loom in the family, presented to his father by his good ally, and sister, the female king of England.

I cannot exactly say how long Colonel Schuyler and his companions staid in England, but I think they were nearly a year absent. In those primeval days of the settlement, when our present rapid modes of transmitting intelligence were unknown, in a country so detached and inland as that at Albany, the return of these interesting travellers was like the first lighting of lamps in a city.

CHAP. IV.

Return of Colonel Schuyler and the Sachems to the interior.—Literary Acquisitions.—Distinguishes and instructs his favourite Niece.—Manners of the Settlers.

THIS sagacious and intelligent patriot thus brought to the foot of the British throne the high spirited rulers of the boundless wild, who alike heedless of the power and splendour of distant monarchs, were accustomed to say with Fingal, "sufficient for me is the desart, with all its deer and woods." It may easily be supposed that such a mind as Philip's was equally fitted to acquire and to communicate intelligence. He who had conversed with Addison, Marlborough, and Godolphin, who had gratified the curiosity of Oxford and Bolingbroke, of Arbuthnot and of Gay, with accounts of nature in her pristine garb, and of her children in their primitive simplicity; he who could

could do all this, no doubt received ample returns of various information from those best qualified to give it; he was besides a diligent observer. Here he improved a taste for literature, native to him, for it had not yet taken root in this uncultivated soil. He brought home the Spectator and the tragedy of Cato, Windsor Forest, Young's poem on the Last Day, and in short all the works, then published, of that constellation of wits which distinguished the last female reign. Nay more, and better, he brought Paradise Lost; which in after-times afforded such delight to some branches of his family, that to them

"Paradise (indeed) seemed opened in the wild."

But to return to our Sachems, from whom we have too long digressed: when they arrived at Albany, they did not, as might be expected, hasten out with him to communicate their discoveries, and display their acquisitions. They summoned a congress there, not only of the elders of their own nation, but also the chiefs

of all those with whom they were in alliance. This solemn meeting was held in the Dutch church. In the present depressed and diminished state of these once powerful tribes, so few traces of their wonted energy remain, that it could scarce be credited, were I able to relate with what bold and flowing eloquence they clothed their conceptions: powerful reasoning, emphatic language, and graceful action, added force to their arguments; they persuaded their adherents to renounce all connexion with the tribes under the French influence; and to form a lasting league, offensive and defensive, with that great queen, whose mild majesty had so deeply impressed them: and with the mighty people whose kindness had gratified and whose power had astonished them, whose populous cities swarmed with arts and commerce, and in whose floating castles they had rode safely over the ocean. I have seen a volume of the speeches of these Mohawks preserved by Colonel Schuyler; they were literally translated, so that the native idiom

was

was preserved; which, instead of rendering them uncouth, seemed to add to their strength and sublimity.

When Colonel Schuyler returned from England, about the year 1709, his niece Catalina, the subject of this narrative, was about seven years old; he had a daughter and sons, yet this child was early distinguished above the rest for docility, a great desire of knowledge, and an even and pleasing temper; this her uncle had early observed. It was at that time very difficult to procure the means of instruction in those inland districts; female education of consequence was conducted on a very limited scale; girls learnt needle work (in which they were indeed both skilful and ingenious) from their mothers and aunts; they were taught too at that period to read, in Dutch, the bible, and a few Calvinist tracts of the devotional kind. But in the infancy of the settlement few girls read English; when they did, they were thought accomplished; they generally spoke it, however imperfectly, and few were taught writing. This confined education precluded elegance; yet, though

there was no polish, there was no vulgarity. The dregs of the people, who subside to the bottom of the mass, are not only degraded by abject poverty, but so utterly shut out from intercourse with the more enlightened, and so rankled with envy from a consciousness of the exclusion, that a sense of their condition gradually debases their minds; and this degradation communicates to their manners, the vulgarity of which we complain. This more particularly applies to the lower class in towns; for mere simplicity, or even a rustic bluntness, I would by no means call vulgarity. At the same time these unembellished females had more comprehension of mind, more variety of ideas, more in short of what may be called original thinking, than could easily be imagined. Their thoughts were not like those of other illiterate women, occupied by the ordinary details of the day, and the gossiping tattle of the neighbourhood. The life of new settlers, in a situation like this, where the very foundations of society were to be laid, was a life of exigencies. Every individual took

an

an interest in the general welfare, and contributed their respective shares of intelligence and sagacity to aid plans that embraced important objects relative to the common good. Every day called forth some new expedient, in which the *comfort* or *advantage* of the whole was implicated; for there were no degrees but those assigned to worth and intellect. This singular community seemed to have a common stock, not only of sufferings and enjoyments, but of information and ideas; some pre-eminence, in point of knowledge and abilities, there certainly was, yet those who possessed it seemed scarcely conscious of their superiority; the daily occasions which called forth the exertions of mind, sharpened sagacity, and strengthened character; avarice and vanity were there confined to very narrow limits; of money there was little; and dress was, though in some instances valuable, very plain, and not subject to the caprice of fashion. The wolves, the bears, and the enraged or intoxicated savages, that always hung threatening on their boundaries, made them more and more endeared

to each other. In this calm infancy of society, the rigours of law slept, because the fury of turbulent passions had not awakened it. Fashion, that capricious tyrant over adult communities, had not erected her standard; that standard, to which the looks, the language, the very opinions of her subjects must be adjusted. Yet no person appeared uncouth, or ill bred, because there was no accomplished standard of comparison. They viewed no superior with fear or envy; and treated no inferior with contempt or cruelty; servility and insolence were thus equally unknown: perhaps they were less solicitous either to please or to shine than the members of more polished societies; because, in the first place, they had no motive either to dazzle or deceive; and in the next, had they attempted it, they felt there was no assuming a character with success, where their native one was so well known. Their manners, if not elegant and polished, were at least easy and independent: the constant efforts necessary to extend their commercial and agricultural possessions, prevented indolence; and

industry

industry was the certain path to plenty. Surrounded on all sides by those whom the least instance of fraud, insolence, or grasping meanness, would have rendered irreconcileable enemies, they were at first obliged to " assume a virtue if they had it not;" and every circumstance that renders virtue habitual, may be accounted a happy one. I may be told that the virtues I describe were chiefly those of situation. I acknowledge it. It is no more to be expected that this equality, simplicity, and moderation, should continue in a more advanced state of society, than that the sublime tranquility, and dewy freshness, which adds a nameless charm to the face of nature, in the dawn of a summer morning, should continue all day. Before increased wealth and extended territory, these " wassel days" quickly receded; yet it is pleasing to indulge the remembrance of a spot, where peace and felicity, the result of moral excellence, dwelt undisturbed, for, alas! hardly for, a century.

CHAP. V.

State of Religion among the Settlers.—Instruction of Children devolved on Females—to whom the Charge of Gardening, &c. was also committed.—Sketch of the State of the Society at New York.

I MUST finish this general outline, by saying something of that religion which gave stability and effect to the virtues of this infant society. Their religion, then, like their original national character, had in it little of fervour or enthusiasm: their manner of performing religious duties was regular and decent, but calm, and to more ardent imaginations might appear mechanical. None ever doubted of the great truths of revelation, yet few seemed to dwell on the result with that lively delight which devotion produces in minds of keener sensibility. If their piety, however, was without enthusiasm, it was also without bigotry: they wished others to think as they did, without shewing rancour or

contempt

contempt towards those who did not. In many individuals, whose lives seemed governed by the principles of religion, the spirit of devotion seemed to be quiescent in the heart, and to break forth in exigencies; yet that monster in nature, an impious woman, was never heard of among them.

Indeed it was on the females that the task of religious instruction generally devolved; and in all cases where the heart is interested, whoever teaches, at the same time learns.

Before I quit this subject, I must observe a singular coincidence; not only the training of children, but of plants, such as needed peculiar care or skill to rear them, was the female province. Every one in town or country had a garden; but all the more hardy plants grew in the field, in rows, amidst the hills, as they were called, of Indian corn. These lofty plants sheltered them from the sun, while the same hoeing served for both: there cabbages, potatoes, and other esculent roots, with variety of gourds

gourds grew to a great size, and were of an excellent quality. Kidney-beans, asparagus, celery, great variety of sallads and sweet herbs, cucumbers, &c. were only admitted into the garden, into which no foot of man intruded, after it was dug in spring. Here were no trees, those grew in the orchard in high perfection; strawberries and many high-flavoured wild fruits of the shrub kind abounded so much in the woods, that they did not think of cultivating them in their gardens, which were extremely neat but small, and not by any means calculated for walking in. I think I yet see what I have so often beheld both in town and country, a respectable mistress of a family going out to her garden, in an April morning, with her great calash, her little painted basket of seeds, and her rake over her shoulder, to her garden labours. These were by no means merely figurative,

"From morn till noon, from noon till dewy eve."

A woman, in very easy circumstances, and abundantly gentle in form and manners, would

would sow, and plant, and rake, incessantly. These fair gardeners were also great florists: their emulation and solicitude in this pleasing employment, did indeed produce "flowers worthy of Paradise." Though not set in "curious knots," they were arranged in beds, the varieties of each kind by themselves; this, if not varied and elegant, was at least rich and gay. To the Schuylers this description did not apply; they had gardeners, and their gardens were laid out in the European manner.

Perhaps I should reserve my description of the manner of living in that country for that period, when by the exertions of a few humane and enlightened individuals it assumed a more regular and determinate form. Yet as the same outline was preserved through all the stages of its progression, I know not but that it may be best to sketch it entirely, before I go further; that the few and simple facts which my narrative affords may not be clogged by explanations relative to the

customs,

customs, or to any other peculiarities which can only be understood by a previous acquaintance with the nature of the country, its political relations, and the manners of the people: my recollection all this while has been merely confined to Albany, and its precincts. At New York there was always a governor, a few troops, and a kind of little court kept; there too was a mixed, and in some degree, polished society. To this the accession of many families of French Hugonots, rather above the middling rank, contributed not a little: those conscientious exiles had more knowledge and piety than any other class of the inhabitants; their religion seemed indeed endeared to them, by what they had suffered for adhering to it. Their number and wealth was such, as enabled them to build not only a street, but a very respectable church in the new city. In this place of worship, within my recollection, service continued to be celebrated in the French language, though the original congregation was by that time much blended

blended in the mass of general society. It was the custom of the inhabitants of the upper settlement, who had any pretensions to superior culture or polish, among which number Mr. Schuyler stood foremost, to go once a year to New York, where all the law courts were held, and all the important business of the province transacted; here too they sent their children occasionally to reside with their relations, and to learn the more polished manners and language of the capital. The inhabitants of that city, on the other hand, delighted in a summer excursion to Albany. The beautiful, and in some places highly singular banks of the river, rendered a voyage to its source both amusing and interesting, while the primitive manners of the inhabitants diverted the gay and idle, and pleased the thoughtful and speculative.

Let me now be indulged in drawing a picture of the abode of my childhood just as, at this time, it presents itself to my mind.

CHAP VI.

Description of Albany.—Manner of living there.—Hermitage, &c.

THE city of Albany stretched along the banks of Hudson; one very wide and long street lay parallel to the river, the intermediate space between it and the shore being occupied by gardens. A small, but steep hill rose above the centre of the town, on which stood a fort, intended (but very ill adapted) for the defence of the place, and of the neighbouring country. From the foot of this hill, another street was built, sloping pretty rapidly down till it joined the one before mentioned that ran along the river. This street was still wider than the other; it was only paved on each side, the middle being occupied by public edifices. These consisted of a market-place, or guard-house, a town hall, and the English

lish and Dutch churches. The English church, belonged to the episcopal persuasion, and in the diocese of the bishop of London, stood at the foot of the hill, at the upper end of the street. The Dutch church was situated at the bottom of the descent where the street terminated; two irregular streets, not so broad, but equally long, ran parallel to those, and a few even ones opened between them. The town, in proportion to its population, occupied a great space of ground. This city, in short, was a kind of semi-rural establishment; every house had its garden, well, and a little green behind; before every door a tree was planted, rendered interesting by being coëval with some beloved member of the family; many of their trees were of a prodigious size and extraordinary beauty, but without regularity, every one planting the kind that best pleased him, or which he thought would afford the most agreeable shade to the open portico at his door, which was surrounded by seats, and ascended by a few

a few steps. It was in these that each domestic group was seated in summer evenings to enjoy the balmy twilight, or the serenely clear moonlight. Each family had a cow, fed in a common pasture at the end of the town. In the evening the herd returned all together, of their own accord, with their tinkling bells hung at their necks, along the wide and grassy street, to their wonted sheltering trees, to be milked at their masters' doors. Nothing could be more pleasing to a simple and benevolent mind than to see thus, at one view, all the inhabitants of a town, which contained not one very rich or very poor, very knowing or very ignorant, very rude or very polished individual; to see all these children of nature enjoying in easy indolence, or social intercourse,

"The cool, the fragrant, and the *dusky* hour,"

clothed in the plainest habits, and with minds as undisguised and artless. These primitive beings were dispersed in porches, grouped according to similarity of years and

and inclinations. At one door were young matrons, at another the elders of the people, at a third the youths and maidens, gaily chatting or singing together, while the children played round the trees, or waited by the cows, for the chief ingredient of their frugal supper, which they generally ate sitting on the steps in the open air. This picture, so familiar to my imagination, has led me away from my purpose, which was to describe the rural œconomy, and modes of living in this patriarchal city. At one end of the town, as I observed before, was a common pasture where all the cattle belonging to the inhabitants grazed together. A never-failing instinct guided each home to her master's door in the evening, where, being treated with a few vegetables and a little fat, which is indispensably necessary for cattle in this country, they patiently waited the night; and after being milked in the morning, they went off in slow and regular procession to the pasture. At the other end of the town was a fertile plain along the river,

ver, three miles in length, and near a mile broad. This was all divided into lots, where every inhabitant raised Indian corn sufficient for the food of two or three slaves, (the greatest number that each family ever possessed,) and for his horses, pigs, and poultry: their flour and other grain they purchased from farmers in the vicinity. Above the town, a long stretch to the westward was occupied first by sandy hills, on which grew bilberries of uncommon size and flavour in prodigious quantities; beyond, rise heights of a poor hungry soil, thinly covered with stunted pines, or dwarf oak. Yet in this comparatively barren tract there were several wild and picturesque spots, where small brooks, running in deep and rich bottoms, nourished on their banks every vegetable beauty; there some of the most industrious early settlers had cleared the luxuriant wood from these charming glens, and built neat cottages for their slaves, surrounded with little gardens and orchards, sheltered from

every

every blast, wildly picturesque, and richly productive. Those small sequestered vales had an attraction that I know not how to describe, and which probably resulted from the air of deep repose that reigned there, and the strong contrast which they exhibited to the surrounding sterility. One of these was in my time inhabited by a hermit. He was a Frenchman, and did not seem to inspire much veneration among the Albanians. They imagined, or had heard, that he retired to that solitude in remorse for some fatal duel in which he had been engaged; and considered him as an idolater because he had an image of the Virgin in his hut. I think he retired to Canada at last; but I remember being ready to worship him for the sanctity with which my imagination invested him, and being cruelly disappointed because I was not permitted to visit him. These cottages were in summer occupied by some of the negroes who cultivated the grounds about them, and served as a place of joyful liberty

to the children of the family on holidays, and as a nursery for the young negroes, whom it was the custom to rear very tenderly, and instruct very carefully.

CHAP. VII.

Gentle Treatment of Slaves among the Albanians.—Consequent Attachment of Domestics.—Reflections on Servitude.

IN the society I am describing, even the dark aspect of slavery was softened into a smile. And I must, in justice to the best possible masters, say that a great deal of that tranquillity and comfort, to call it by no higher name, which distinguished this society from all others, was owing to the relation between master and servant being better understood here than in any other place. Let me not be detested as an advocate for slavery when I say that I think I have never seen people so happy in servitude as the domestics of the Albanians. One reason was, (for I do not now speak of the virtues of their masters,) that each family had few of them, and that there were no field negroes. They would re-

mind one of Abraham's servants, who were all born in the house; this was exactly their case. They were baptised too, and shared the same religious instruction with the children of the family; and, for the first years, there was little or no difference with regard to food or clothing between their children and those of their masters.

When a negroe-woman's child attained the age of three years, it was solemnly presented, the first New Year's Day following, to a son or daughter, or other young relative of the family who was of the same sex with the child so presented. The child to whom the young negro was given immediately presented it with some piece of money and a pair of shoes; and from that day the strongest attachment grew between the domestic and the destined owner. I have no where met with instances of friendship more tender and generous than that which here subsisted between the slaves and their masters and mistresses. Extraordinary proofs of them have been often given in the course of hunting

or

or of Indian trading; when a young man and his slave have gone to the trackless woods together, in the case of fits of the ague, loss of a canoe, and other casualties happening near hostile Indians. The slave has been known, at the imminent risk of his life, to carry his disabled master through unfrequented wilds, with labour and fidelity scarce credible; and the master has been equally tender on similar occasions of the humble friend who stuck closer than a brother; who was baptised with the same baptism, nurtured under the same roof, and often rocked in the same cradle with himself. These gifts of domestics to the younger members of the family were not irrevocable: yet they were very rarely withdrawn. If the kitchen family did not increase in proportion to that of the master, young children were purchased from some family where they abounded, to furnish those attached servants to the rising progeny. They were never sold without consulting their mother, who, if expert and sagacious, had a great deal to say in the family, and would

allow her children to go into any family with whose domestics she was not acquainted. These negro-women piqued themselves on teaching their children to be excellent servants, well knowing servitude to be their lot for life, and that it could only be sweetened by making themselves particularly useful, and excelling in their department. If they did their work well, it is astonishing, when I recollect it, what liberty of speech was allowed to those active and prudent mothers. They would chide, reprove, and expostulate in a manner that we would not endure from our hired servants; and sometimes exert fully as much authority over the children of the family as the parents, conscious that they were entirely in their power. They did not crush freedom of speech and opinion in those by whom they knew they were beloved, and who watched with incessant care over their interest and comfort. Affectionate and faithful as these home-bred servants were in general, there were some instances (but very few) of those who, through levity of mind, or a love of liquor

finery, betrayed their trust, or habitually neglected their duty. In these cases, after every means had been used to reform them, no severe punishments were inflicted at home. But the terrible sentence, which they dreaded worse than death, was passed —they were sold to Jamaica. The necessity of selling them was bewailed by the whole family as a most dreadful calamity, and the culprits were carefully watched on their way to New York, lest they should evade the sentence by self-destruction.

One must have lived among those placid and humane people to be sensible that servitude, hopeless, endless servitude, could exist with so little servility and fear on the one side, and so little harshness or even sternness of authority in the other. In Europe, the footing on which service is placed in consequence of the corruptions of society, hardens the heart, destroys confidence, and embitters life. The deceit and venality of servants not absolutely dishonest, put it out of one's power to love or trust them. And if in hopes of having people attached to us who will

neither betray our confidence, nor corrupt our children, we are at pains to rear them from childhood, and give them a religious and moral education; after all our labour, others of their own class may seduce them away to those who can afford to pay higher for their services. This is not the case in a few remote districts, from which surrounding mountains seem to exclude the contagion of the world; there some traces of fidelity and affection among domestics still remain. But it must be remarked that, in those very districts, it is usual to treat inferiors with courtesy and kindness, and to consider those domestics who marry out of the family as holding a kind of relation to it, and still claiming protection. In short, the corruption of that class of people is, doubtless, to be attributed to the example of their superiors. But how severely are those superiors punished? Why this general indifference about home? why are the household gods, why is the sacred hearth so wantonly abandoned? Alas! the charm of home is destroyed, since our children,

children, educated in distant seminaries, are strangers in the paternal mansion; and our servants, like mere machines, move on their mercenary track without feeling or exciting one kind or generous sentiment. Home, thus despoiled of all its charms, is no longer the scene of any enjoyments but such as wealth can purchase. At the same time we feel there a nameless cold privation, and, conscious that money can procure the same enjoyments with more variety elsewhere, we substitute these futile and evanescent pleasures for the perennial spring of calm satisfaction, "without o'erflowing full," which is fed by the exercise of the kindly affections; and soon indeed must those stagnate, where there are not proper objects to excite them.—I have been forced into this painful digression by unavoidable comparisons.

Amidst all this mild and really tender indulgence to their negroes, these colonists had not the smallest scruple of conscience with regard to the right by which they held them in subjection. Had that been the case, their singular humanity

have been incompatible with continued injustice. But the truth is, that of law the generality of those people knew little; and of philosophy, nothing at all. They sought their code of morality in the Bible, and imagined that they there found this hapless race condemned to perpetual slavery; and thought nothing remained for them but to lighten the chains of their fellow Christians, after having made them such. I neither "extenuate," nor "set down in malice," but merely record the fact. At the same time it is but justice to record also a singular instance of moral delicacy distinguishing this settlement from every other in the like circumstances, though, from their simple and kindly modes of life, they were from infancy in habits of familiarity with their negroes, yet being early taught that nature had placed between them a barrier, which it was in a high degree criminal and disgraceful to pass, they considered a mixture of such distinct races, with abhorreuce, as a violation of her laws. This greatly conduced to the preservation of family

family happiness and concord. An ambiguous race, which the law does not acknowledge; and who (if they have any moral sense, must be as much ashamed of their parents as these last are of them) are certainly a dangerous, because degraded part of the community. How much more so must be those unfortunate beings who stand in the predicament of the bat in the fable, whom both birds and beasts disowned? I am sorry to say that the progress of the British army, when it arrived, might be traced by a spurious and ambiguous race of this kind. But of a mulatto born before their arrival I only remember a single instance; and from the regret and wonder it occasioned, considered it as singular. Colonel Schuyler, of whom I am to speak, had a relation so weak and defective in capacity, that he never was intrusted with any thing of his own, and lived an idle bachelor about the family. In process of time a favourite negro-woman, to the great offence and scandal of the family, bore a child to him, whose colour gave testimony to

the relation. The boy was carefully educated; and, when he grew up a farm was allotted to him well stocked and fertile, but "in depth of woods embraced," about two miles back from the family seat. A destitute white woman, who had somehow wandered from the older colonies, was induced to marry him; and all the branches of the family thought it incumon them now and then pay a quiet visit to Chalk (for so, for some unknown reason, they always called him). I have been in Chalk's house myself, and a most comfortabode it was; but I considered him as a mysterious and anomalous being.

I have dwelt the longer on this singular instance of slavery, existing devoid of its attendant horrors, because the fidelity and affection resulting from a bond of union so early formed between master and servant contributed so very much to the safety of individuals, as well as to the general comfort of society, as will hereafter appear.

CHAP. VIII.

Education and early Habits of the Albanians described.

THE foundations both of friendship and still tenderer attachments were here laid very early by an institution which I always thought had been peculiar to Albany, till I found in Dr. Moore's View of Society on the Continent an account of a similar custom subsisting in Geneva. The children of the town were all divided into companies, as they called them, from five or six years of age, till they became marriageable. How those companies first originated, or what were their exact regulations, I cannot say; though I, belonging to none, occasionally mixed with several, yet always as a stranger, notwithstanding that I spoke their current language fluently. Every company contained as many boys as girls. But I do not know that there was any limited number; only this I recollect, that

that a boy and a girl of each company, who were older, cleverer, or had some other pre-eminence above the rest, were called heads of the company, and, as such, were obeyed by the others. Whether they were voted in, or attained their pre-eminence by a tacit acknowledgement of their superiority, I know not; but however it was attained, it was never disputed. The company of little children had also their heads. All the children of the same age were not in one company; there were at least three or four of equal ages, who had a strong rivalry with each other; and children of different ages, in the same family, belonged to different companies. Wherever there is human nature there will be a degree of emulation, strife, and a desire to lower others, that we may exalt ourselves. Dispassionate as my friends comparatively were, and bred up in the highest attainable candour and innocence, they regarded the company most in competition with their own with a degree of jealous animosity. Each company, at a certain time of the year, went in a body

to

to gather a particular kind of berries, to the hill. It was a sort of annual festival, attended with religious punctuality. Every company had an uniform for this purpose; that is to say, very pretty light baskets made by the Indians, with lids and handles, which hung over the arm, and were adorned with various colours. One company would never allow the least degree of taste to the other in this instance; and was sure to vent its whole stock of spleen in decrying the rival baskets. Nor would they ever admit that the rival company gathered near so much fruit on these excursions as they did. The parents of these children seemed very much to encourage this manner of marshalling and dividing themselves. Every child was permitted to entertain the whole company on its birth-day, and once besides, during winter and spring. The master and mistress of the family always were bound to go from home on these occasions, while some old domestic was left to attend and watch over them, with an ample provision of tea, chocolate, preserved

and

and dried fruits, nuts, and cakes of various kinds, to which was added cyder or a syllabub; for these young friends met at four, and did not part till nine or ten, and amused themselves with the utmost gaiety and freedom in any way their fancy dictated. I speak from hearsay; for no person that does not belong to the company is ever admitted to these meetings: other children or young people visit occasionally, and are civilly treated, but they admit of no intimacies beyond their company. The consequence of these exclusive and early intimacies was, that grown up, it was reckoned a sort of apostacy to marry out of one's company, and indeed it did not often happen. The girls, from the example of their mothers, rather than any compulsion, very early became notable and industrious, being constantly employed in knitting stockings, and making clothes for the family and slaves; they even made all the boys' clothes. This was the more necessary, as all articles of clothing were extremely dear. Though all the necessaries of life, and some luxuries, abounded

abounded, money, as yet, was a scarce commodity. This industry was the more to be admired, as children were here indulged to a degree that, in our vitiated state of society, would have rendered them good for nothing. But there, where ambition, vanity, and the more turbulent passions were scarce awakened; where pride, founded on birth, or any external pre-eminence, was hardly known; and where the affections flourished fair and vigorous, unchecked by the thorns and thistles with which our minds are cursed in a more advanced state of refinement, affection restrained parents from keeping their children at a distance, and inflicting harsh punishments. But then they did not treat them like apes or parrots, by teaching them to talk with borrowed words and ideas, and afterwards gratifying their own vanity by exhibiting these premature wonders to company, or repeating their sayings. They were tenderly cherished, and early taught that they owed all their enjoyments to the Divine Source of beneficence, to whom they were finally accountable

countable for their actions; for the rest they were very much left to nature, and permitted to range about at full liberty in their earliest years, covered in summer with some slight and cheap garb, which merely kept the sun from them, and in winter with some warm habit, in which convenience only was consulted. Their dress of ceremony was never put on but when their *company* were assembled. They were extremely fond of their children; but, luckily for the latter, never dreamed of being vain of their immature wit and parts, which accounts in some measure, for the great scarcity of coxcombs among them. The children returned the fondness of their parents with such tender affection, that they feared giving them pain as much as ours do punishment, and very rarely wounded their feelings by neglect, or rude answers. Yet the boys were often wilful and giddy at a certain age, the girls being sooner tamed and domesticated.

These youths were apt, whenever they could carry a gun, (which they did at a very

very early period,) to follow some favourite negro to the woods, and, while he was employed in felling trees, to range the whole day in search of game, to the neglect of all intellectual improvement; and they thus contracted a love of savage liberty which might, and in some instances did, degenerate into licentious and idle habits. Indeed, there were three stated periods in the year when, for a few days, young and old, masters and slaves, were abandoned to unruly enjoyment, and neglected every serious occupation for pursuits of this nature.

We who occupy countries fully inhabited can form no idea of the multitude of birds and animals that nature provides to consume her waste fertility in those regions unexplored by man. In the interior of the province the winter is much colder than might be supposed, from the latitude in which it lies, which is only 42° 36′; this is owing to the keen north winds which blow constantly for four or five months over vast frozen lakes and snowy tracts, in the direction of Canada.

The

The snow too lies very deep; but when once they are visited by the south wind in March, its literally warm approach dissolves the snow like magic; and one never sees another wintery day till the season of cold returns. These southern winds seem to flow in a rapid current, uninterrupted by mountains or other obstacles, from the burning sands of the Floridas, Georgia, and the Carolinas, and bring with them a degree of warmth, that appears no more the natural result of the situation, than the intense cold of winter does in that season.

Along the sea banks in all these southern provinces, are low sandy lands, which never were nor will be inhabited, covered with the berry-bearing myrtle, from which wax is extracted fit for candles. Behind these banks are woods and unwholesome swamps of great extent. The myrtle groves formerly mentioned afford shelter and food to countless multitudes of pigeons in winter, when their fruit is in season; while wild geese and ducks, in numbers nearly as great, pass the winter in the impenetrable swamps behind. Some time in the

the month of April, a general emigration tak s place to the northward, first of the geese and ducks, and then of the pigeons; they keep the direction of the sea coast till they come to the mouths of the great rivers, and then follow their course till they reach the great lakes in the interior, where nature has provided for them with the same liberality as in their winter haunts. On the banks of these lakes there are large tracts of ground, covered with a plant taller and more luxuriant than the wild carrot, but something resembling it, on the seeds of which the pigeons feed all the summer, while they are breeding and rearing their young. When they pass in spring, which they always do in the same track, they go in great numbers, and are very fat. Their progression northward and southward begins always about the vernal and autumnal equinoxes; and it is this that renders the carnage so great when they pass over inhabited districts. They begin to fly in the dawn, and are never seen after nine or ten o'clock in the morning, possibly feeding and resting in the

the woods all the rest of the day. If the morning be dry and windy, all the fowlers (that is, every body) are disappointed, for then the pigeons fly so high that no shot can reach them; but in a cloudy morning the carnage is incredible; and it is singular that their migration falls out at the times of the year when the weather (even in this serene climate,) is generally cloudy. This migration, as it passed by, occasioned, as I said before, a total relaxation from all employments, and a kind of drunken gaiety, though it was rather slaughter than sport; and, for above a fortnight, pigeons in pies and soups, and every way they could be dressed, were the food of the inhabitants. These were immediately succeeded by wild geese and ducks, which concluded the carnival for that season, which was to be renewed in September. About six weeks after the passage of these birds, sturgeons of a large size, and in great quantity, made their appearance in the river. Again the same ardour seemed to pervade all ages in pursuit of this new object. Every family had a canoe;

a canoe; and on this occasion all were launched; and these persevering fishers traced the course of the sturgeon up the river; followed them by torch light; and often continued two nights upon the water, never returning till they had loaded their canoes with this valuable fish, and many other very excellent in their kinds, that come up the river usually at the same time. The sturgeon not only furnished them with good part of their food in the summer months, but was pickled or dried for future use or exportation.

CHAP. IX.

Description of the Manner in which the Indian Traders set out on their first Adventure.

To return to the boys, as all young men were called here till they married. Thus early trained to a love of sylvan sports, their characters were unfolded by contingencies. In this infant society penal laws lay dormant, and every species of coercion was unknown.

Morals, founded on Christianity, were fostered by the sweet influence of the charities of life. The reverence which children in particular had for their parents, and the young in general for the old, were the chief bond that held society together. This veneration, being founded on esteem, certainly could only have existed thus powerfully in an uncorrupted community. It had, however, an auxiliary no less powerful.

Here,

Here, indeed, it might with truth be said,

" Love breath'd his infant sighs from anguish free."

In consequence of the singular mode of associating little exclusive parties of children of both sexes, which has been already mentioned, endearing intimacies, formed in the age of playful innocence, were the precursors of more tender attachments.

These were not wrought up to romantic enthusiasm or extravagant passion by an inflamed imagination, or by the fears of rivalry, or the artifices of coquetry, yet they had power sufficient to soften the manners and elevate the character of the lover.

I know not if this be the proper place to observe, how much of the general order of society, and the happiness of a people, depend on marriage being early and universal among them: but of this more hereafter. The desire (undiverted by any other passion) of obtaining the object of their affection, was to them a stimulus to

early and severe exertion. The enamoured youth did not listlessly fold his arms and sigh over his hopeless or unfortunate passion. Of love not fed by hope they had not an idea. Their attachments originated at too early an age, and in a circle too familiar to give room for those first-sight impressions of which we hear such wonders. If the temper of the youth was rash and impetuous, and his fair one gentle and complying, they frequently formed a rash and precipitate union without consulting their relations, when perhaps the elder of the two was not above seventeen. This was very quietly borne by the parties aggrieved. The relations of both parties met, and with great calmness consulted on what was to be done. The father of the youth or the damsel, whichever it was who had most wealth, or fewest children, brought home the young couple; and the new married man immediately set about a trading adventure, which was renewed every season, till he had the means of providing a home of his own. Meantime the increase of the

younger

younger family did not seem an inconvenience, but rather a source of delight to the old people; and an arrangement begun from necessity was often continued through choice for many years after. Their tempers, unruffled by the endless jealousies and competitions incident to our mode of life, were singularly placid, and the love of offspring, where children were truly an unmixed blessing, was a common sentiment which united all the branches of the family and predominated over every other. The jarring and distrust, the petulance and *egotism*, which, distinct from all weightier considerations, would not fail to poison concord, were different families to dwell under one roof here, were there scarcely known. It is but justice to our acquired delicacy of sentiment to say, that the absence of refinement contributed to this tranquillity. These primitive people, if they did not gather the flowers of cultivated elegance, were not wounded by the thorns of irritable delicacy: they had neither artificial wants, nor artificial miseries. In short,

they were neither too wise to be happy, nor too witty to be at rest.

Thus it was in the case of unauthorized marriages. In the more ordinary course of things, love, which makes labour light, tamed these young hunters, and transformed them into diligent and laborious traders, for the nature of their trade included very severe labour. When one of the *boys* was deeply smitten, his fowling-piece and fishing rod were at once relinquished. He demanded of his father forty or at most fifty dollars, a negro boy, and a canoe; all of a sudden he assumed the brow of care and solicitude, and began to smoke, a precaution absolutely necessary to repel aguish damps, and troublesome insects. He arrayed himself in a habit very little differing from that of the Aborigines, into whose bounds he was about to penetrate, and in short commenced Indian trader. That strange amphibious animal, who, uniting the acute senses, the strong instincts, and the unconquerable patience and fortitude of the savage, with the art, policy,

licy, and inventions of the European, encountered in the pursuit of gain dangers and difficulties equal to those described in the romantic legends of chivalry.

The small bark canoe in which this hardy adventurer embarked himself, his fortune, and his faithful *squire*, (who was generally born in the same house, and predestined to his service,) was launched amidst the tears and prayers of his female relations, amongst whom was generally included his destined bride, who well knew herself to be the motive of this perilous adventure.

The canoe was entirely filled with coarse strouds and blankets, guns, powder, beads, &c. suited to the various wants and fancies of the natives; one pernicious article was never wanting, and often made a great part of cargo. This was ardent spirits, for which the natives too early acquired a relish, and the possession of which always proved dangerous, and sometimes fatal to the traders. The Mohawks bring their furs and other peltry habitually to the stores of their wonted

and patrons. It was not in that easy and safe direction that these trading adventures extended. The canoe generally steered northward towards the Canadian frontier. They passed by the Flats and Stonehook in the outset of their journey. Then commenced their toils and dangers at the famous water-fall called the Cohoes, ten miles above Albany, where three rivers, uniting their streams into one, dash over a rocky shelf, and falling into a gulph below with great violence, raise clouds of mist bedecked with splendid rain-bows. This was the Rubicon which they had to cross before they plunged into pathless woods, ingulphing swamps, and lakes, the opposite shores of which the eye could not reach. At the Cohoes, on account of the obstruction formed by the torrent, they unloaded their canoe, and carried it above a mile further upon their shoulders, returning again for the cargo, which they were obliged to transport in the same manner. This was but a prelude to labours

bours and dangers, incredible to those who dwell at ease. Further on, much longer carrying places frequently recurred: where they had the vessel and cargo to drag through thickets impervious to the day, abounding with snakes and wild beasts, which are always to be found on the side of rivers.

Their provision of food was necessarily small, from fear of over loading the slender and unstable conveyance already crouded with goods. A little dried beef and Indian corn-meal was their whole stock, though they formerly enjoyed both plenty and variety. They were in a great measure obliged to depend upon their own skill in hunting and fishing, and on the hospitality of the Indians: for hunting, indeed, they had small leisure, their time being sedulously employed by the obstacles that retarded their progress. In their slight and fragile canoes, they often had to cross great lakes, on which the wind raised a terrible surge. Afraid of going into the track of the French traders, who were

always dangerous rivals, and often declared enemies, they durst not follow the direction of the river St. Lawrence; but, in search of distant territories and unknown tribes, were wont to deviate to the east and south-west, forcing their painful way towards the source of "rivers unknown to song," whose winding course was often interrupted by shallows, and oftener still by fallen trees of great magnitude lying across, which it was requisite to cut through with their hatchets before they could proceed. Small rivers which wind through fertile valleys, in this country, are peculiarly liable to this obstruction. The chesnut and hiccory grow to so large a size in this kind of soil, that in time they become top-heavy, and are then the first prey to the violence of the winds; and thus falling, form a kind of accidental bridge over these rivers.

When the toils and dangers of the day were over, the still greater terrors of the night commenced. In this, which might literally be styled the howling wilderness, they were forced to sleep in the open air, which

which was frequently loaded with the humid evaporation of swamps, ponds, and redundant vegetation. Here the axe must be again employed to procure the materials of a large fire even in the warmest weather. This precaution was necessary, that the flies and muskitoes might be expelled by the smoke, and that the wolves and bears might be deterred by the flame from incroaching on their place of rest. But the light which afforded them protection created fresh disturbance.

" Loud as the wolves on Orca's stormy steep,
Howl to the roarings of the northern deep,"

the American wolves howl to the fires kindled to affright them, watching the whole night on the surrounding hills to keep up a concert which truly " rendered night hideous :" meantime the bull frogs, terrible though harmless, and smaller kinds of various tones and in countless numbers, seemed all night calling to each other from opposite swamps, and formed the most dismal assemblage of discordant

sounds. Though serpents abounded very much in the woods, few of them were noxious. The rattle-snake, the only dangerous reptile, was not so frequently met with as in the neighbouring provinces; and the remedy which nature has bestowed as an antidote to his bite, was very generally known. The beauties of rural and varied scenery seldom compensated the traveller for the dangers of his journey. "In the close prison of innumerous boughs," and on ground thick with under-wood, there was little of landscape open to the eye. The banks of streams and lakes no doubt afforded a rich variety of trees and plants: the former of a most majestic size, the latter of singular beauty and luxuriance; but otherwise they only travelled through a grove of chesnuts or oak, to arrive at another of maple, or poplar, or a vast stretch of pines and other ever-greens. If by chance they arrived at a hill crowned with cedars, which afforded some command of prospect, still the gloomy and interminable forest, only varied with dif-

different shades of green, met the eye which every way turned, while the mind, repelled by solitude so vast, and silence so profound, turned inward on itself. Nature here wore a veil rich and grand, but impenetrable: at least this was the impression likely to be made on an European mind; but a native American, familiar from childhood with the productions and inhabitants of the woods, sought the nuts and wild fruits with which they abounded, the nimble squirrel in all its varied forms, the architect beaver, the savage racoon, and the stately elk; where we should see nothing but awful solitudes untrod by human foot. It is inconceivable how well these young travellers, taught by their Indian friends, and the experimental knowledge of their fathers, understood every soil and its productions. A boy of twelve years old would astonish you with his accurate knowledge of plants, their properties, and their relation to the soil and to each other. "Here," said he, "is a wood of "red oak, when it is grubbed up this

" will be loam and sand, and make good
" Indian-corn ground. This chesnut
" wood abounds with strawberries, and
" is the very best soil for wheat. The
" poplar wood yonder is not worth clear-
" ing; the soil is always wet and cold.
" There is a hiccory wood, where the
" soil is always rich and deep, and does
" not run out; such and such plants that
" dye blue, or orange, grow under it."

This is merely a slight epitome of the wide views of nature that are laid open to these people from their very infancy, the acquisition of this kind of knowledge being one of their first amusements; yet those who were capable of astonishing you by the extent and variety of this local skill, in objects so varied and so complicated, never heard of a petal, corolla, or stigma in their lives, nor even of the strata of that soil, with the productions and properties of which they were so intimately acquainted.

Without compass, or guide of any kind, the traders steered through these pathless forests. In those gloomy days when

when the sun is not visible, or in winter, when the falling snows obscured his beams, they made an incision on the bark on the different sides of a tree; that on the north was invariably thicker than the other, and covered with moss in much greater quantity. And this never-failing indication of the polar influence, was to those sagacious travellers a sufficient guide. They had indeed several subordinate monitors. Knowing so well as they did the quality of the soil by the trees or plants most prevalent, they could avoid a swamp, or approach with certainty to a river or high ground if such was their wish, by means that to us would seem incomprehensible. Even the savages seldom visited these districts, except in the dead of winter; they had towns, as they called their summer dwellings, on the banks of the lakes and rivers in the interior, where their great fishing places were. In the winter, their grand hunting parties were in places more remote from our boundaries, where the deer and other larger animals took shelter from the neighbourhood of

man. These single adventurers sought the Indians in their spring haunts as soon as the rivers were open; there they had new dangers to apprehend. It is well known that among the natives of America, revenge was actually a virtue, and retaliation a positive duty; while faith was kept with these people they never became aggressors. But the Europeans, by the force of bad example, and strong liquors, seduced them from their wonted probity. Yet from the first their notion of justice and revenge was of that vague and general nature, that if they considered themselves injured, or if one of their tribe had been killed by an inhabitant of any one of our settlements, they considered any individual of our nation as a proper subject for retribution. This seldom happened among our allies; indeed never, but when the injury was obvious, and our people very culpable. But the avidity of gain often led our traders to deal with Indians, among whom the French possessed a degree of influence, which produced a smothered animosity to our nation.

nation. When at length, after conquering numberless obstacles, they arrived at the place of their destination, these daring adventurers found occasion for no little address, patience, and indeed courage, before they could dispose of their cargo, and return safely with the profits.

The successful trader had now laid the foundation of his fortune, and approved himself worthy of her for whose sake he encountered all these dangers. It is utterly inconceivable, how even a single season, spent in this manner, ripened the mind, and changed the whole appearance, nay the very character of the countenance of these demi-savages, for such they seem on returning from among their friends in the forests. Lofty, sedate, and collected, they seem masters of themselves, and independent of others; though, sun-burnt and austere, one scarce knows them till they unbend. By this Indian likeness, I do not think them by any means degraded. One must have seen these people, (the Indians I mean,) to have any idea what a noble animal man is, while unsophisticated

unsophisticated. I have been often amused with the descriptions that philosophers, in their closets, who never in their lives saw a man, but in his improved or degraded state, give of uncivilized people; not recollecting that they are at the same time uncorrupted. Voyagers, who have not their language, and merely see them transiently, to wonder and be wondered at, are equally strangers to the real character of man in a social, though unpolished state. It is no criterion to judge of the state of society by the roaming savages (truly such) who are met with on these inhospitable coasts, where nature is niggardly of her gifts, and where the skies frown continually on her hard fated children. For some good reason to us unknown, it is requisite that human beings should be scattered through all habitable space, "till gradual life goes out beneath the pole:" and to beings so destined, what misery would result from social tenderness and fine perceptions. Of the class of social beings (for such indeed they were) of whom I speak, let us judge from

from the traders who know their language and customs, and from the adopted prisoners who have spent years among them. How unequivocal, how consistent is the testimony they bear to their humanity, friendship, fortitude, fidelity, and generosity; but the indulgence of the recollections thus suggested have already led me too far from my subject.

The joy that the return of these youths occasioned was proportioned to the anxiety their perilous journey had produced. In some instances the union of the lovers immediately took place before the next career of gainful hardships commenced. But the more cautious went to New York in winter, disposed of their peltry, purchased a larger cargo, and another slave and canoe. The next year they laid out the profits of their former adventures in flour and provisions, the staple of the province; this they disposed of at the Bermuda Islands, where they generally purchased one of those light sailing cedar schooners, for building of which those islanders are famous, and proceeding

to

the Leeward Islands, loaded it with a cargo of rum, sugar, and molasses.

They were now ripened into men, and considered as active and useful members of society, possessing a stake in the common weal.

The young adventurer had generally finished this process by the same time he was one or (at most) two and twenty. He now married, or if married before, which pretty often was the case, brought home his wife to a house of his own. Either he kept his schooner, and loading her with produce, sailed up and down the river all summer, and all winter disposed of the cargoes he obtained in exchange to more distant settlers; or he sold her, purchased European goods, and kept a store. Otherwise he settled in the country, and became as diligent in his agricultural pursuits as if he had never known any other.

CHAP. X.

Marriages, Amusements, rural Excursions, &c. among the Albanians.

It was in this manner that the young colonist made the transition from boyhood to manhood; from the disengaged and careless bachelor, to the provident and thoughtful father of a family; and thus was spent that period of life so critical in polished society to those whose condition exempts them from manual labour. Love, undiminished by any rival passion, and cherished by innocence and candour, was here fixed by the power of early habit, and strengthened by similarity of education, tastes, and attachments. Inconstancy or even indifferency among married couples was unheard of, even where there happened to be a considerable disparity in point of intellect. The extreme affection they bore to their mutual offspring was a bond that for ever endeared

endeared them to each other. Marriage in this colony was always early, very often happy, and very seldom indeed interested. When a man had a son there was nothing to be expected with a daughter but a well-brought-up female slave, and the furniture of the best bed-chamber. At the death of her father she obtained another division of his effects, such as he thought she needed or deserved, for there was no rule in these cases.

Such was the manner in which those colonists began life; nor must it be thought that those were mean or uninformed persons. Patriots, magistrates, generals, those who were afterwards wealthy, powerful, and distinguished, all, except a few elder brothers, occupied by their possessions at home, set out in the same manner; and in after life, even in the most prosperous circumstances, they delighted to recount the "humble toils and destiny obscure" of their early years.

The very idea of being ashamed of any thing that was neither vicious nor indecent

decent never entered the head of an Albanian. Early accustomed to this noble simplicity, this dignified candour, I cannot express the contempt and disgust I felt at the shame of honourable poverty, that extreme desire of concealing our real condition, and appearing what we are not, which peculiarly characterizes, I had almost said disgraces, the northern part, more particularly, of this island. I have often wondered how this vile sentiment, that undermines all true greatness of mind, should prevail here more than in England, where wealth, beyond a doubt, is more respected, at least preponderates more over birth, and heart, and mind, and many other valuable considerations. As a people we certainly are not sordid, why then should we descend to the meanness of being ashamed of our condition, while we have not done any thing to degrade ourselves? Why add a sting to poverty, and a plume to vanity, by the poor transparent artifice that conceals nothing, and only changes pity into scorn?

Before

Before I quit the subject of Albanian manners, I must describe their amusements, and some other peculiarities in their modes of life. When I say their amusements, I mean those in which they differed from most other people. Such as they had in common with others require no description. They were exceedingly social, and visited each other very frequently, beside the regular assembling together in their porches every fine evening. Of the more substantial luxuries of the table they knew little, and of the formal and ceremonious parts of good breeding still less.

If you went to spend a day any where, you were received in a manner we should think very cold. No one rose to welcome you; no one wondered you had not come sooner, or apologised for any deficiency in your entertainment. Dinner, which was very early, was served exactly in the same manner as if there were only the family. The house indeed was so exquisitely neat and well regulated, that you could not surprise these people; they saw each

each other so often and so easily, that intimates made no difference. Of strangers they were shy; not by any means from want of hospitality, but from a consciousness that people who had little to value themselves on but their knowledge of the modes and ceremonies of polished life, disliked their sincerity, and despised their simplicity. If you shewed no insolent wonder, but easily and quietly adopted their manners, you would receive from them not only very great civility, but much essential kindness. Whoever has not common sense and common gratitude enough to pay this tribute of accommodation to those among whom he is destined for the time to live, must of course be an insulated, discontented being, and come home railing at the people whose social comforts he disdained to partake. After sharing this plain and unceremonious dinner, which might, by the bye, chance to be a very good one, but was invariably that which was meant for the family, tea was served in at a very early hour. And here it was that

the

distinction shewn to strangers commenced. Tea here was a perfect regale, being served up with various sorts of cakes unknown to us, cold pastry, and great quantities of sweetmeats and preserved fruits of various kinds, and plates of hiccory and other nuts ready cracked. In all manner of confectionery and pastry these people excelled; and having fruit in great plenty, which cost them nothing, and getting sugar home at an easy rate, in return for their exports to the West Indies, the quantity of these articles used in families, otherwise plain and frugal, was astonishing. Tea was never unaccompanied with one of these petty articles; but for strangers a great display was made. If you staid supper, you were sure of a most substantial though plain one. In this meal they departed, out of compliment to the strangers, from their usual simplicity. Having dined between twelve and one, you were quite prepared for it. You had either game or poultry roasted, and always shell-fish in the season: you had also fruit in abundance. All this with much neatness but no form.

The

The seeming coldness with which you were first received wore off by degrees. They could not accommodate their topics to you, and scarcely attempted it. But the conversation of the old, though limited in regard to subjects, was rational and easy, and had in it an air of originality and truth not without its attractions. That of the young was natural and playful, yet full of localities, which lessened its interest to a stranger, but were extremely amusing when you became one of the initiated.

Their diversions (I mean those of the younger class) were marked by a simplicity which, to strangers, appeared rude and childish. In spring, eight or ten of one company, or related to each other, young men and maidens, would set out together in a canoe on a kind of rural excursion, of which amusement was the object. Yet so fixed were their habits of industry, that they never failed to carry their work-baskets with them, not as a form, but as an ingredient necessarily mixed with their pleasures. They went

without attendants; and steered a devious course of four, five, or perhaps more, miles, till they arrived at some of the beautiful islands with which this fine river abounded, or at some sequestered spot on its banks, where delicious wild-fruits, or particular conveniencies for fishing, afforded some attraction. There they generally arrived by nine or ten o'clock, having set out in the cool and early hour of sun-rise. Often they met another party going, perhaps, to a different place, and joined them, or induced them to take their route. A basket with tea, sugar, and the other usual provisions for breakfast, with the apparatus for cooking it; a little rum and fruit for making cool weak punch, the usual beverage in the middle of the day, and now and then some cold pastry, were the sole provision; for the great affair was to depend on the sole exertions of the *boys*, in procuring fish, wild ducks, &c. for their dinner. They were all, like Indians, ready and dexterous with the axe, gun, &c. Whenever they arrived at their destination they sought

sought out a dry and beautiful spot opposite to the river, and in an instant with their axes cleared so much superfluous shade or shrubbery as left a semicircular opening, above which they bent and twined the boughs, so as to form a pleasant bower, while the girls gathered dried branches, to which one of the youths soon set fire with gunpowder, and the breakfast, a very regular and cheerful one, occupied an hour or two ; the young men then set out to fish, or perhaps to shoot birds, and the maidens sat busily down to their work, singing and conversing with all the ease and gaiety which the benign serenity of the atmosphere and the beauty of the surrounding scene were calculated to inspire. After the sultry hours had been thus employed, the *boys* brought their tribute from the river or the wood, and found a rural meal prepared by their fair companions, among whom were generally their sisters and the chosen of their hearts. After dinner they all set out together to gather wild strawberries, or whatever other fruit was in

season; for it was accounted a reproach to come home empty-handed. When weary of this amusement, they either drank tea in their bower, or returning, landed at some friend's on the way, to partake of that refreshment. Here, indeed,

"Youth's free spirit, innocently gay,
Enjoyed the most that innocence could give."

Another of their summer amusements was going to the Bush, which was thus managed: a party of young people set out in little open carriages, something in the form of a gig, of which every family had one; every one carried something with him, as in these cases there was no hunting to furnish provision. One brought wine for negus, another tea and coffee of a superior quality, a third a pigeon pye; in short, every one brought something, no matter how trifling, for there was no emulation about the extent of the contribution. In this same bush, there were spots to which the poorer members of the community retired, to work their way with patient industry, through much privation

vation and hardship, compared to the plenty and comfort enjoyed by the rest. They perhaps could only afford to have one negro-woman, whose children, as they grew up, became to their master a source of plenty and ease: but in the mean time the good man wrought hard himself, having a little occasional aid sent him by his friends. He had plenty of the necessaries of life, but no luxuries. His wife and daughters milked the cows and wrought at the hay, and his house was on a smaller scale than the older settlers had theirs, yet he had always one neatly-furnished room:—A very clean house, with a pleasant portico before it, generally a fine stream beside his dwelling, and some Indian wigwams near it. He was wood-surrounded, and seemed absolutely to live in the bosom of nature, screened from all the artificial ills of life; and those spots cleared of incumbrances, yet rich in native luxuriance, had a wild originality about them not easily described. The young parties, or sometimes the elder ones, who set out on this woodland excursion,

had no fixed destination; they travelled generally in the forenoon, and when they were tired of going on the ordinary road, turned into the *bush*, and whenever they saw an inhabited spot, with the appearance of which they were pleased, they went in with all the ease of intimacy, and told them they were come to spend the afternoon there. The good people, not in the least surprised at this intrusion, very calmly opened the reserved apartments, or if it were very hot, received them in the portico. The guests produced their stores, and they boiled their tea-kettle, and provided cream, nuts, or any peculiar dainty of the woods which they chanced to have; and they always furnished bread and butter, which were excellent in their kinds. They were invited to share the collation, which they did with great ease and frankness: then dancing, or any other amusement that struck their fancy, succeeded. They sauntered about the bounds in the evening, and returned by moonlight. These good people felt not the least embarrassed at the

the rustic plainness of every thing about them; they considered themselves as in the way, after a little longer exertion of patient industry, to have every thing that the others had; and their guests thought it an agreeable variety, in this abrupt manner to visit their sequestered abodes.

CHAP. X.

Winter Amusements of the Albanians, &c.

In winter the river, frozen to a great depth, formed the principal road through the country, and was the scene of all those amusements of skating, and sledge races, common to the north of Europe. They used in great parties to visit their friends at a distance, and having an excellent and hardy breed of horses, flew from place to place over the snow or ice in these sledges with incredible rapidity, stopping a little while at every house they came to, where they were always well received, whether acquainted with the owners or not. The night never impeded these travellers, for the atmosphere was so pure and serene, and the snow so reflected the moon and star-light, that the nights exceeded the days in beauty.

In

In town all the *boys* were extravagantly fond of a diversion that to us would appear a very odd and childish one. The great street of the town, in the midst of which, as has been formerly mentioned, stood all the churches and public buildings, sloped down from the hill on which the fort stood, towards the river; between the buildings was an unpaved carriage-road, the foot-path beside the houses being the only part of the street which was paved. In winter this sloping descent, continued for more than a quarter of a mile, acquired firmness from the frost, and became extremely slippery. Then the amusement commenced. Every boy and youth in town, from eight to eighteen, had a little low sledge, made with a rope like a bridle to the front, by which one could drag it by the hand. On this one or two at most could sit, and the sloping descent being made as smooth as a looking-glass, by sliders' sledges, &c. perhaps an hundred at once set out in succession from the top of the street, each seated in his little sledge with the rope in his

hand, which, drawn to the right or left, served to guide him. He pushed it off with a little stick, as one would launch a boat; and then, with the most astonishing velocity, precipitated by the weight of the owner, the little machine glided past, and was at the lower end of the street in an instant. What could be so peculiarly delightful in this rapid and smooth descent, I could never discover; yet in a more retired place, and on a smaller scale; I have tried the amusement; but to a young Albanian, slaying, as he called it, was one of the first joys of life, though attended with the drawback of dragging his sledge to the top of the declivity every time he renewed his flight, for such it might well be called. In the managing this little machine some dexterity was necessary: an unskilful Phæton was sure to fall. The vehicle was so low, that a fall was attended with little danger, yet with much disgrace, for an universal laugh from all sides assailed the fallen charioteer. This laugh was from a very full chorus, for the

the constant and rapid succession of the train, where every one had a brother, lover, or kinsman, brought all the young people in town to the porticos, where they used to sit wrapt in furs till ten or eleven at night, engrossed by the delectable spectacle. What magical attraction it could possibly have, I never could find out; but I have known an Albanian, after residing some years in Britain, and becoming a polished fine gentleman, join the sport, and slide down with the rest. Perhaps, after all our laborious refinements in amusement, being easily pleased is one of the great secrets of happiness, as far as it is retainable in this "frail and feverish being."

Now there remains another amusement to be described, which I mention with reluctance, and should hardly venture to mention at all, if I had not found a precedent for it among the virtuous Spartans. Had Lycurgus himself been the founder of their community, the young men could scarce have stolen with more alacrity and dexterity. I could never

conjecture how the custom could possible originate among a set of people of such perfect and plain integrity. But thus it was. The young men now and then spent a convivial evening at a tavern together, where from the extreme cheapness of liquor, their bills (even when they committed an occasional excess) were very moderate. Either to lessen the expence of the supper, or from the pure love of what they stiled frolick, (Anglicè mischief,) they never failed to steal either a roasting pig or a fat turkey for this festive occasion. The town was the scene of these depredations, which never extended beyond it. Swine and turkeys were reared in great numbers by all the inhabitants. For those they brought to town in winter, they had an appropriate place at the lower end of the garden, in which they locked them up It is observable, that these animals were the only things locked up about the house, for this good reason, that nothing else ran the least risk of being stolen. The dexterity of the

theft

theft consisted in climbing over very high walls, watching to steal in when the negroes went down to feed the horse or cow, or making a clandestine entrance at some window or aperture: breaking up doors was quite out of rule, and rarely ever resorted to. These exploits were always performed in the darkest nights; if the owner heard a noise in his stables, he usually ran down with a cudgel, and laid it without mercy on any culprit he could overtake. This was either dexterously avoided, or patiently borne. To plunder a man, and afterwards offer him any personal injury, was accounted scandalous; but the turkies or pigs were never recovered. In some instances a whole band of these young plunderers would traverse the town, and carry off such a prey as would afford provision for many jovial nights. Nothing was more common than to find one's brothers or nephews amongst these pillagers.

Marriage was followed by two dreadful privations: a married man could not fly down the street in a little sledge, nor join

a party

a party of pig-stealers, without outraging decorum. If any of their confederates married, as they frequently did, very young, and were in circumstances to begin house-keeping, they were sure of an early visit of this nature from their old confederates. It was thought a great act of gallantry to overtake and chastise the robbers. I recollect an instance of one young married man, who had not long attained to that dignity; his turkies screaming violently one night, he ran down to chastise the aggressors; he overtook them in the fact: but finding they were his old associates, he could not resist the force of habit, so joined the rest in another exploit of the same nature, and then shared his own turkey at the tavern. There were two inns in the town, the masters of which were "honourable men:" yet these pigs and turkies were always received and dressed without questioning whence they came. In one instance, a young party had in this manner provided a pig, and ordered it to be roasted at the King's Arms; another party attacked

tacked the same place whence this booty was taken, but found it already rifled. This party was headed by an idle mischievous young man, who was the Ned Poins of his fraternity: well guessing how the stolen roasting-pig was disposed of, he ordered his friends to adjourn to the rival tavern, and went himself to the King's Arms. Enquiring in the kitchen (where a pig was roasting) who supped there, he soon arrived at certainty: then taking an opportunity when there was no one in the kitchen but the cook-maid, he sent for one of the jovial party, who were at cards up stairs. During her absence, he cut the string by which the pig was suspended, laid it in the dripping-pan, and through the quiet and dark streets of that sober city, carried it safely to the other tavern: where, after finishing the roasting, he and his companions prepared to regale themselves. Meantime the pig was missed at the King's Arms; and it was immediately concluded, from the dexterity and address with which this trick was performed, that no other

but

but the Poins aforesaid could be the author of it. A new stratagem was now devised to outwit this stealer of the stolen. An adventurous youth of the despoiled party laid down a parcel of shavings opposite to the other tavern, and setting them in a blaze, cried fire ! a most alarming sound here, where such accidents were too frequent. Every one rushed out of the house, just as supper had been served. The dextrous purveyor, who had occasioned all this disturbance, stole in, snatched up the dish with the pig in it, stole out again by the back door, and feasted his companions with the recovered spoils.

These were a few idle young men, the sons of avaricious fathers, who grudging to advance the means of pushing them forward by the help of their own industry to independence, allowed them to remain so long unoccupied, that their time was wasted, and habits of conviviality at length degenerated in those of dissipation. They were not only pitied and endured, but received with a wonderful degree of kind-

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ness and indulgence. They were usually a kind of wags, went about like privileged persons, at whose jests no one took offence; and were in their discourse and style of humour, so much like Shakspeare's clowns, that on reading that admirable author, I thought I recognized my old acquaintances. Of them, however, I saw little, the society admitted at my friends' being very select.

CHAP. XI.

Lay-Brothers.—Catalina.—Detached Indians.

BEFORE I quit this attempt to delineate the members of which this community was composed, I must mention a class of aged persons, who, united by the same recollections, pursuits, and topics, associated very much with each other, and very little with a world which they seemed to have renounced. They might be styled lay-brothers. and were usually widowers, or persons who, in consequence of some early disappointment, had remained unmarried. These were not devotees, who had, as was formerly often the case in catholic countries, run from the extreme of licentiousness to that of bigotry. They were generally persons who were never marked as being irreligious or immoral; and were just as little distinguished for peculiar strictness, or devotional

votional fervour. These good men lived in the house of some relation, where they had their own apartments to themselves; and only occasionally mixed with the family. The people of the town lived to a great age; ninety was frequently attained: and I have seen different individuals of both sexes who had reached a hundred. These ancients seemed to place all their delight in pious books and devotional exercises, particularly in singing psalms, which they would do in their own apartments for hours together. They came out and in like ghosts, and were treated as such; for they never spoke unless when addressed, and seemed very careless of the things of this world, like people who had got above it. Yet they were much together, and seemed to enjoy each other's conversation. Retrospection on the scenes of early life, anticipations of that futurity so closely veiled from our sight, and discussions regarding various passages of holy writ, seemed their favourite themes. They were mild and benevolent, but abstracted, and unlike

other

other people. Their happiness, for happy I am convinced they were, was of a nature peculiar to themselves, not obvious to others. Some there were, not deficient in their attention to religious duties, who living in the bosom of their families, took an active and cheerful concern to the last in all that amused or interested them; and I never understood that the lay-brothers, as I have chosen to call them, blamed them for so doing. One of the first christian virtues, charity in the most accepted and common sense of the word, had little scope. Here a beggar was unheard of. People, such as I have described in the *bush*, or going there, were no more considered as objects of pity, than we consider an apprentice as such, for having his time to serve before he sets up for himself. In such cases, the wealthier, because older settlers, frequently gave a heifer or a colt each, to a new beginner, who set about clearing land in their vicinity. Orphans were never neglected; and from their early marriages, and the casualties to which their

manner

manner of life subjected [illegible] these were not unfrequent. You never e[illegible] house without meeting children. Maidens, bachelors and childless married people, all adopted orphans, and all treated them as if they were their own.

Having given a sketch, which appears to my recollection (aided by subsequent conversations with my fellow travellers) a faithful one, of the country and its inhabitants, it is time return to the history of the mind of Miss Schuyler, for by no other circumstances than prematurity of intellect, and superior culture, were her earliest years distinguished. Her father, dying early, left her very much to the tuition of his brother. Her uncle's frontier situation made a kind of barrier to the settlement; while the powerful influence, that his knowledge of nature and of character, his sound judgement and unstained integrity, had obtained over both parties, made him the bond by which the Aborigines were united with the colonists. Thus little leisure was left him for domestic enjoyments,

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or literary pursuits, for both of which his mind was peculiarly adapted. Of the leisure he could command, however, he made the best use; and soon distinguishing Catalina as the one amongst his family to whom nature had been most liberal, he was at pains to cultivate her taste for reading, which soon discovered itself, by procuring for her the best authors in history, divinity, and the belles lettres: in this latter branch, her reading was not very extensive: but then, the few books of this kind that she possessed were very well chosen; and she was early and intimately familiar with them. What I remember of her, assisted by comparisons since made with others, has led me to think that extensive reading, superficial and indiscriminate, such as the very easy access to books among us encourages, is not at an early period of life favourable to solid thinking, true taste, or fixed principle. Whatever she knew, she knew to the bottom; and the reflections, which were thus suggested to her strong discerning mind, were digested by means of easy and instructive

instructive conversation. Colonel Schuyler had many relations in New York; and the governor and other ruling characters there carefully cultivated the acquaintance of a person so well qualified to instruct and inform them on certain points. Having considerable dealings in the fur-trade too, he went every winter to the capital for a short time, to adjust his commercial concerns, and often took his favourite niece along with him, who, being of an uncommon quick growth and tall stature, soon attracted attention by her personal graces, as well as by the charms of her conversation. I have been told, and should conclude from a picture I have seen drawn when she was fifteen, that she was in her youth very handsome. Of this few traces remained when I knew her; excessive corpulence having then overloaded her majestic person, and entirely changed the aspect of a countenance once eminently graceful. In no place did female excellence of any kind more amply receive its due tribute of applause and admiration than here, for various

various reasons. First, cultivation and refinement were rare. Then it was not the common routine that women should necessarily have such and such accomplishments; pains were taken only on minds strong enough to bear improvement without becoming conceited or pedantic. And lastly, as the spur of emulation was not invidiously applied, those who acquired a superior degree of knowledge considered themselves as very fortunate in having a new source of enjoyment opened to them. But never having been made to understand that the chief motive of excelling was to dazzle or outshine others, they no more thought of despising their less fortunate companions, than of assuming pre-eminence for discovering a wild plum-tree or bee-hive in the woods, though, as in the former case, they would have regarded such a discovery as a benefit and a pleasure; their acquisitions, therefore, were never shaded by affectation. The women were all natives of the country, and few had more than

domestic

domestic education. But men, who possessed the advantages of early culture and usage of the world, daily arrived on the continent from different parts of Europe. So that if we may be indulged in the inelegant liberty of talking commercially of female elegance, the supply was not equal to the demand. It may be easily supposed that Miss Schuyler met with due attention; who, even at this early age, was respected for the strength of her character, and the dignity and composure of her manners. Her mother, whom she delighted to recollect, was mild, pious, and amiable; her acknowledged worth was chastened by the utmost diffidence. Yet accustomed to exercise a certain power over the minds of the natives, she had great influence in restraining their irregularities, and swaying their opinions. From her knowledge of their language, and habit of conversing with them, some detached Indian families resided for a while in summer in the vicinity of houses occupied by the more wealthy and benevolent inhabitants. They generally

built a slight wigwam under shelter of the orchard-fence on the shadiest side; and never were neighbours more harmless, peaceable and obliging; I might truly add, industrious; for in one way or other they were constantly occupied. The women and their children employed themselves in many ingenious handicrafts, which since the introduction of European arts and manufactures, have greatly declined. Baking trays, wooden dishes, ladles and spoons, shovels and rakes; brooms of a peculiar manufacture, made by splitting a birch-block into slender but tough filaments; baskets of all kinds and sizes, made of similar filaments, enriched with the most beautiful colours, which they alone knew how to extract from vegetable substances, and incorporate with the wood. They made also of the birch-bark, (which is here so strong and tenacious, that cradles and canoes are made of it,) many receptacles for holding fruit and other things, curiously adorned with embroidery, not inelegant, done with the sinews of deer; and leggans

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and moquesans, a very comfortable and highly ornamental substitute for shoes and stockings, then universally used in winter among the men of our own people. They had also a beautiful manufacture of deer-skin, softened to the consistence of the finest Chamois leather, and embroidered with beads of Wampum, formed like bugles; these, with great art and industry, they formed out of shells, which had the appearance of fine white porcelaine, veined with purple. This embroidery shewed both skill and taste, and was among themselves highly valued. They had belts, large embroidered garters, and many other ornaments, formed, first of deer sinews, divided to the size of coarse thread, and afterwards, when they obtained worsted thread from us, of that material, formed in a manner which I could never comprehend. It was neither knitted nor wrought in the manner of net, nor yet woven; but the texture was more like that of an officer's sash than any thing I can compare it to. While the women and children were thus employed, the men some-

times assisted them in the more laborious part of their business, but oftener occupied themselves in fishing on the rivers, and drying or preserving, by means of smoke, in sheds erected for the purpose, sturgeon and large eels, which they caught in great quantities, and of an extraordinary size, for winter provision.

Boys on the verge of manhood, and ambitious to be admitted into the hunting parties of the ensuing winter, exercised themselves in trying to improve their skill in archery, by shooting birds, squirrels, and racoons. These petty huntings helped to support the little colony in the neighbourhood, which however derived its principal subsistence from an exchange of their manufactures with the neighbouring family, for milk, bread, and other articles of food.

The summer residence of these ingenious artisans promoted a great intimacy between the females of the vicinity and the Indian women, whose sagacity and comprehension of mind were beyond belief.

It is a singular circumstance, that though they

they saw the negroes in every respectable family not only treated with humanity, but cherished with parental kindness, they always regarded them with contempt and dislike, as an inferior race, and would have no communication with them. It was necessary then that all conversations should be held, and all business transacted with these females, by the mistress of the family. In the infancy of the settlement the Indian language was familiar to the more intelligent inhabitants, who found it very useful, and were, no doubt, pleased with its nervous and emphatic idiom, and its lofty and sonorous cadence. It was indeed a noble and copious language, when one considers that it served as the vehicle of thought to a people whose ideas and sphere of action we should consider as so very confined.

CHAP. XIII.

Progress of Knowledge.—Indian Manners.

CONVERSATION with those interesting and deeply reflecting natives, was, to thinking minds, no mean source of entertainment. Communication soon grew easier; for the Indians had a singular facility in acquiring languages; the children especially; as I well remember, from experimental knowledge, for I delighted to hover about the wigwam, and converse with those of the Indians, and we very frequently mingled languages. But to return to my subject: whatever comfort or advantage a good and benevolent mind possesses, it is willing to extend to others. The mother of my friend, and other matrons, who like her experienced the consolations, the hopes, and the joys of christianity, wished those estimable natives to share in their pure enjoyments.

Of all others these mild and practical christians

christians were the best fitted for making proselytes. Unlike professed missionaries, whose zeal is not always seconded by judgement, they did not begin by alarming the jealousy with which all manner of people watch over their hereditary prejudices. Engaged in active life, they had daily opportunities of demonstrating the truth of their religion by its influence upon their conduct. Equally unable and unwilling to enter into deep disquisitions or polemical arguments, their calm and unstudied explanations of the essential doctrines of christianity were the natural results which arose out of their ordinary conversation. To make this better understood, I must endeavour to explain what I have observed in the unpolished society that occupies the wild and remote districts of different countries. Their conversation is not only more original, but, however odd the expression may appear, more philosophical than that of persons equally destitute of mental culture in more populous districts. They derive their sub-

jects of reflection and conversation rather from natural objects, which lead minds, possessing a certain degree of intelligence, more forward to trace effects to their causes. Nature there, too, is seen arrayed in virgin beauty and simple majesty. Her various aspects are more grand and impressive. Her voice is more distinctly heard, and sinks deeper into the heart. These people, more dependent on the simples of the fields and the wild fruits of the woods; better acquainted with the forms and instincts of the birds and beasts, their fellow denizens in the wild; and more observant of every constellation and every change in the sky, from living so much in the open air, have a wider range of ideas than we are aware of. With us, art every where combats nature, opposes her plainest dictates, and too often conquers her. The poor are so confined to the spot where their occupations lie, so engrossed by their struggles for daily bread, and so surrounded by the works of man, that those of their Creator are almost exclud-

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ed from their view, at least they form a very small part of the subjects that engross their thoughts. What knowledge they have is often merely the husks and orts that fall from the table of their superiors, which they swallow without chewing.

Many of those who are one degree above the lowest class, see nature in poetry, novels, and other books, and never think of looking for her any where else: like a person amused by the reflection of the starry heavens or shifting clouds from a calm lake, who never lifts his eyes to those objects of which he sees the imperfect though resembling pictures.

Those who live in the undisguised bosom of tranquil nature, and whose chief employment it is, by disincumbering her of waste luxuriance, to discover and improve her latent beauties, need no borrowed enthusiasm to relish her sublime and graceful features. The venerable simplicity of the sacred scriptures has something extremely attractive for a mind in this state. The soul which is the most

familiar with its Creator in his works, will be always the most ready to recognize him in his word. Conversations, which had for their subject the nature and virtues of plants, the extent and boundaries of woods and lakes, and the various operations of instinct in animals, under those circumstances where they are solely directed by it, and the distinct customs and manners of various untutored nations, tended to expand the mind, and teach it to aspire to more perfect intelligence. The untaught reasoners of the woods could not but observe that the Europeans knew much that was concealed from them, and derived many benefits and much power from that knowledge. Where they saw active virtue keep pace with superior knowledge, it was natural to conclude that persons thus beneficially enlightened, had clearer and ampler views, of that futurity, which to them only dimly gleamed through formless darkness. They would suppose, too, that those illuminated beings had some means of approaching nearer to that source of light

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and perfection from which wisdom is derived, than they themselves had attained. Their minds being thus prepared by degrees, these pious matrons (probably assisted by those lay-brothers of whom I have spoken) began to diffuse the knowledge of the distinguishing doctrines of christianity among the elderly and well-intentioned Indian women. These did not by any means receive the truth without examination: the acuteness of intellect which discovered itself in their objections (of which I have heard many striking instances) was astonishing; yet the humble and successful instruments of enlightening those sincere and candid people, did by no means take to themselves any merit in making proselytes. When they found their auditors disposed to listen diligently to the truth, they sent them to the clergyman of the place, who instructed, confirmed, and baptized them. I am sorry that I have not a clear and distinct recollection of the exact manner, or of the numbers, &c. of these first converts, of whom I shall say more hereafter;

after; but I know that this was the usual process. They were, however, both zealous and persevering, and proved the means of bringing many others under the law of love, to which it is reasonable to suppose the safety of this unprotected frontier was greatly owing at that crisis, that of the first attacks of the French. The Indian women, who from motives of attachment to particular families, or for the purpose of carrying on the small traffic already mentioned, were wont to pass their summers near the settlers, were of detached and wandering families, who preferred this mode of living to the labour of tilling the ground, which entirely devolved upon the women among the Five nations. By tilling the ground I would not be understood to mean any settled mode of agriculture, requiring cattle, inclosures, or implements of husbandry. Grain made but a very subordinate part of their subsistence, which was chiefly derived from fishing and hunting. The little they had was maize; this with kid-

ney beans and tobacco, the only plants they cultivated, was sown in some very pleasant fields along the Mohawk river, by the women, who had no implements of tillage but the hoe, and a kind of wooden spade. These fields lay round their *castles*, and while the women were thus employed, the men were catching and drying fish by the rivers or on the lakes. The younger girls were much busied during summer and autumn, in gathering wild fruits, berries, and grapes, which they had a peculiar mode of drying, to preserve them for the winter. The great cranberry they gathered in abundance, which, without being dried, would last the whole winter, and was much used by the settlers. These dried fruits were no luxury; a fastidious taste would entirely reject them. Yet, besides furnishing another article of food, they had their use, as was evident. Without some antiseptic, they who lived the whole winter on animal food, without a single vegetable, or any thing of the nature of bread, unless now and then a little maize,

maize, which they had the art of boiling down to softness in lye of wood-ashes, must have been liable to that great scourge of northern nations in their primitive state, the scurvy, had not this simple desert been a preservative against it. Rheumatisms, and sometimes agues affected them, but no symptom of any cutaneous disease was ever seen on an Indian.

The stragglers from the confines of the orchards did not fail to join their tribes in winter; and were zealous, and often successful in spreading their new opinions. The Indians supposed that every country had its own mode of honouring the great spirits to whom all were equally acceptable. This had, on one hand, the bad effect of making them satisfied with their own vague and undefined notions; and on the other, the good one of making them very tolerant of those of others. If you do not insult their belief, (for mode of worship they have scarce any,) they will hear you talk of yours with the greatest patience and attention. Their good breeding, in this respect,

respect, was really superlative. No Indian ever interrupted any, the most idle talker: but when they concluded, he would deliberately, methodically, and not ungracefully answer or comment upon all they had said, in a manner which shewed that not a word had escaped him.

Lady Mary Montague ludicrously says, that the court of Vienna was the paradise of old women; and that there is no other place in the world where a woman past fifty excites the least interest. Had her travels extended to the interior of North America, she would have seen another instance of this inversion of the common mode of thinking. Here a woman never was of consequence, till she had a son old enough to fight the battles of his country; from that date, she held a superior rank in society; was allowed to live at ease, and even called to consultations on national affairs. In savage and warlike countries, the reign of beauty is very short, and its influence comparatively limited. The girls in childhood had a very pleasing appearance; but excepting

excepting their fine hair, eyes and teeth, every external grace was soon banished by perpetual drudgery, carrying burdens too heavy to be borne, and other slavish employments considered beneath the dignity of the men. These walked before, erect and graceful, decked with ornaments, which set off to advantage the symmetry of their well formed persons, while the poor women followed, meanly attired, bent under the weight of the children and utensils which they carried every where with them, and disfigured and degraded by ceaseless toils. They were very early married: for a Mohawk had no other servant but his wife; and whenever he commenced hunter, it was requisite that he should have some one to carry his load, cook his kettle, make his moquesans, and above all, produce the young warriors who were to succeed him in his honours of the chase and of the tomahawk. Wherever man is a mere hunter, woman is a mere slave. It is domestic intercourse that softens man, and elevates woman; and of that there can be little, where

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the employments and amusements are not in common: the ancient Caledonians honoured the fair; but then, it is to be observed, they were fair huntresses, and moved in the light of their beauty, to the hill of roes; and the culinary toils were entirely left to the rougher sex. When the young warrior above alluded to made his appearance, it softened the cares of his mother; who well knew that when he grew up, every deficiency in tenderness to his wife would be made up in superabundant duty and affection to her. If it were possible to carry filial veneration to excess, it was done here; for all other charities were absorbed in it. I wonder this system of depressing the sex in their early years, to exalt them when all their juvenile attractions were flown, and when mind alone can distinguish them, has not occurred to our modern reformers. The Mohawks took good care not to admit their women to share their prerogatives, till they approved themselves good wives and mothers.

This digression, long as it is, has a very intimate

intimate connexion with the character of my friend; she early adopted the views of her family, in regard to those friendly Indians, which greatly enlarged her mind, and ever after influenced her conduct. She was, even in childhood, well acquainted with their language, opinions, and customs; and, like every other person possessed of a liberality or benevolence of mind, whom chance had brought acquainted with them, was exceedingly partial to those high-souled and generous natives. The Mohawk language was early familiar to her; she spoke Dutch and English with equal ease and purity; was no stranger to the French tongue; and could (I think) read German. I have heard her speak it. From the conversations which her active curiosity led her to hold with native Africans, brought into her father's family, she was more intimately acquainted with the customs, manners, and government of their native country, than she could have been, by reading all that was ever written on the subject. Books are, no doubt, the gra-

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naries of knowledge; but a diligent enquiring mind, in the active morning of life, will find it strewed like manna over the face of the earth; and need not in all cases, rest satisfied with intelligence accumulated by others, and tinctured with their passions and prejudices. Whoever reads Homer or Shakespear may daily discover that they describe both nature and art from their own observation. Consequently you see the images, reflected from the mirror of their great minds, differing from the descriptions of others, as the reflection of an object in all its colours and proportions from any polished surface, does from a shadow on a wall, or from a picture drawn from recollection. The enlarged mind of my friend, and her simple yet easy and dignified manners, made her readily adapt herself to those with whom she conversed, and every where command respect and kindness; and, on a nearer acquaintance, affection followed; but she had too much sedateness and independence to adopt those caressing and insinuating manners, by which

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the vain and the artful so soon find their way into shallow minds. Her character did not captivate at once, but gradually unfolded itself; and you had always something new to discover. Her style was grave and masculine, without the least embellishment; and at the same time so pure, that every thing she said might be printed without correction, and so plain, that the most ignorant and most inferior persons were never at a loss to comprehend it. It possessed, too, a wonderful flexibility; it seemed to rise and fall with the subject. I have not met with a style which, to noble and uniform simplicity, united such variety of expression. Whoever drinks knowledge pure at its sources, solely from a delight in filling the capacities of a large mind, without the desire of dazzling or out-shining others; whoever speaks for the sole purpose of conveying to other minds those ideas, from which he himself has received pleasure and advantage, may possess this chaste and natural style: but it is not to be acquired by art or study.

CHAP. XIV.

Marriage of Miss Schuyler. — Description of the Flats.

MISS S. had the happiness to captivate her cousin Philip, eldest son of her uncle, who was ten years older than herself, and was *in all respects* to be accounted a suitable, and in the worldly sense, an advantageous match for her. His father was highly satisfied to have the two objects on whom he had bestowed so much care and culture united. They were married in the year 1719 *, when she was in the eighteenth year of her age. When the old colonel died, he left considerable possessions to be divided among his children, and from the quantity of plate, paintings, &c. which they shared, there is reason to believe he must have brought some of his wealth from Holland, as in those days people had little means of enriching

* Miss Schuyler was born in the year 1701.

riching themselves in new settlements. He had also considerable possessions in a place near the town, now called Fish Kill, about twenty miles below Albany. His family residence, however, was at the Flats, a fertile and beautiful plain on the banks of the river. He possessed about two miles on a stretch of that rich and level champain. This possession was bounded on the east by the river Hudson, whose high banks overhung the stream and its pebbly strand, and were both adorned and defended by elms, (larger than ever I have seen in any other place), decked with natural festoons of wild grapes, which abound along the banks of this noble stream. These lofty elms were left, when the country was cleared, to fortify the banks against the masses of thick ice which make war upon them in spring, when the melting snows burst this glassy pavement, and raise the waters many feet above their usual level. This precaution not only answers that purpose, but gratifies the mind by presenting to the eye a rem-

nant

nant of the wild magnificence of nature amidst the smiling scenes produced by varied and successful cultivation. As you came along by the north end of the town, where the *Patroon* had his seat, you afterwards past by the inclosures of the citizens, where (as formerly described) they planted their corn, and arrived at the Flats, Colonel Schuyler's possession. On the right you saw the river in all its beauty, there above a mile broad. On the opposite side the view was bounded by steep hills, covered with lofty pines from which a waterfall descended, which not only gave animation to the sylvan scene, but was the best barometer imaginable, foretelling by its varied and intelligible sounds every approaching change, not only of the weather, but of the wind. Opposite to the grounds lay an island, above a mile in length, and about a quarter in breadth, which also belonged to the Colonel: exquisitely beautiful it was, and though the haunt I most delighted in, it is not in my power to describe it.

Imagine

Imagine a little Egypt, yearly overflowed, and of the most redundant fertility. This charming spot was at first covered with wood, like the rest of the country, except a long field in the middle, where the Indians had probably cultivated maize; round this was a broad shelving border, where the grey and the weeping willows, the bending osier, and numberless aquatic plants not known in this country, were allowed to flourish in the utmost luxuriance, while within, some tall sycamores and wild fruit trees towered above the rest. Thus was formed a broad belt, which in winter proved an impenetrable barrier against the broken ice, and in summer was the haunt of numberless birds and small animals, who dwelt in perfect safety, it being impossible to penetrate it. Numberless were the productions of this luxuriant spot; never was a richer field for a botanist; for though the ice was kept off, the turbid waters of the spring flood overflowed it annually, and not only deposited a rich sediment, but left the seeds of various

rious plants swept from the shores it had passed by. The centre of the island, which was much higher than the sides, produced with a slight degree of culture the most abundant crops of wheat, hay, and flax. At the end of the island, which was exactly opposite to the family mansion, a long sand-bank extended; on this was a very valuable fishing-place, of which a considerable profit might be made. In summer, when the water was low, this narrow stripe (for such it was) came in sight, and furnished an amusing spectacle; for there the bald or white-headed eagle (a large picturesque bird, very frequent in this country), the ospray, the heron, and the curlew, used to stand in great numbers in a long row, like a military arrangement, for a whole summer day, fishing for perch and a kind of fresh-water herring which abounded there. At the same season a variety of wild ducks, which bred on the shores of the island, (among which was a small white diver of an elegant form), led forth their young to try their first excursion. What

a scene have I beheld on a calm summer evening! There indeed were " fringed banks" richly fringed, and wonderfully variegated; where every imaginable shade of colour mingled, and where life teemed prolific on every side. The river, a perfect mirror, reflected the pine-covered hills opposite; and the pliant shades bent without a wind, round this enchanting island, while hundreds of the white divers, saw-bill ducks with scarlet heads, teal, and other aquatic birds, sported at once on the calm waters. At the discharge of a gun from the shore, these feathered beauties all disappeared at once, as if by magic, and in an instant rose again to view in different places.

How much they seemed to enjoy that life which was so new to them! for they were the young broods first led forth to sport upon the waters. While the fixed attitude and lofty port of the large birds of prey, who were ranged upon the sandy shelf, formed an inverted picture in the same clear mirror, and were a pleasing contrast to the playful multitude around.

These

These they never attempted to disturb, well aware of the facility of escape which their old retreats afforded them. Such of my readers as have had patience to follow me to this favourite isle, will be, ere now, as much bewildered as I have often been on its luxuriant shores. To return to the southward: on the confines of what might then be called an interminable wild, rose two gently sloping eminences, about half a mile from the shore. From each of these a large brook descended, bending through the plain, and having its course marked by the shades of primæval trees and shrubs, left there to shelter the cattle when the ground was cleared. On these eminences, in the near neighbourhood and full view of the mansion at the Flats, were two large and well built dwellings, inhabited by Colonel Schuyler's two younger sons, Peter and Jeremiah. To the elder was allotted the place inhabited by his father, which, from its lower situation and level surface, was called the Flats. There was a custom pre-

valent among the new settlers something like that of gavel-kind: they made a pretty equal division of lands among their younger sons. The eldest, by pre-eminence of birth, had a larger share, and generally succeeded to the domain inhabited by his father, with the slaves, cattle, and effects upon it.

This, in the present instance, was the lot of the eldest son of that family whose possessions I have been describing. His portion of land on the shore of the river was scarcely equal in value to those of his brothers, to whose possessions the brooks I have mentioned formed a natural boundary, dividing them from each other, and from his. To him was allotted the costly furniture of the family, of which paintings, plate and china constituted the valuable part; every thing else being merely plain and useful. They had also a large house in Albany, which they occupied occasionally.

I have neglected to describe in its right place the termination or back ground of the

the landscape I have such delight in recollecting. There the solemn and interminable forest was varied at intervals by rising grounds, near streams where birch and hiccory, maple and poplar, cheered the eye with a lighter green, through the prevailing shade of dusky pines. On the border of the wood, where the trees had been thinned for firing, was a broad shrubbery all along, which marked the edges of the wood above the possessions of the brothers as far as it extended.

This was formed of shumack, a shrub with leaves, continually changing colour through all the varieties, from blending green and yellow, to orange tawny, and adorned with large lilac-shaped clusters of bright scarlet grains, covered with pungent dust of a sharp flavour, at once saline and acid. This the Indians use as salt to their food, and for the dyeing of different colours. The red glow, which was the general result of this natural border, had a fine effect, thrown out from the dusky shades which towered behind.

To the northward, a sandy tract, covered with low pines, formed a boundary betwixt the Flats and Stonehook, which lay further up the river.

CHAP. XV.

Character of Philip Schuyler.—His Management of the Indians.

PHILIP SCHUYLER, who, on the death of his father, succeeded to the inheritance I have been describing, was a person of a mild benevolent character, and an excellent understanding, which had received more culture than was usual in that country. But whether he had returned to Europe, for the purpose of acquiring knowledge in the public seminaries there, or had been instructed by any French protestants, who were sometimes retained in the principal families for such purposes, I do not exactly know; but am led rather to suppose the latter, from the connexion which always subsisted between that class of people and the Schuyler family.

When the intimacy between this gentleman and the subject of these memoirs took place she was a mere child; for the colonel, as he was soon after called, was

ten years older than she. This was singular there, where most men married under twenty. But his early years were occupied by momentous concerns; for, by this time, the public safety began to be endangered by the insidious wiles of the French Canadians, to whom our frontier settlers began to be formidable rivals in the fur trade, which the former wished to engross. In process of time, the Indians, criminally indulged with strong liquors, by the most avaricious and unprincipled of the traders, began to have an insatiable desire for them, and the traders' avidity for gain increased in the same proportion.

Occasional fraud on the one hand gave rise to occasional violence on the other. Mutual confidence decayed, and hostility betrayed itself, when intoxication laid open every thought. Some of our trade were, as the colonists alleged, treacherously killed in violation of treaties solemnly concluded between them and the offending tribes.

The mediation and protection of the Mohawk

Mohawk tribes were, as usual, appealed to. But these shrewd politicians saw evidently the value of their protection to an unwarlike people, who made no effort to defend themselves; and who, distant from the source of authority, and contributing nothing to the support of government, were in a great measure neglected. They began also to observe, that their new friends were extending their possessions on every side, and conscious of their wealth and increasing numbers, did not so assiduously cultivate the good-will of their faithful allies as formerly. These nations, savage as we may imagine them, were as well skilled in the arts of negociation as the most polite Europeans. They waged perpetual war with each other about their hunting-grounds; each tribe laying claim to some vast wild territory destined for that purpose, and divided from other districts by boundaries which we should consider as merely ideal, but which they perfectly understood. Yet these were not so distinctly defined as to preclude all dispute; and a casual encroachment

on this imaginary deer-park was a sufficient ground of hostility; and this, not for the value of the few deer or bears which might be killed, but that they thought their national honour violated by such an aggression. The system of revenge, which subsisted with equal force among them all, admitted of no sincere conciliation till the aggrieved party had obtained at least an equal number of scalps and prisoners for those that they had lost. This bloody reckoning was not easily adjusted. After a short and hollow truce, the remaining balance on either side afforded a pretext for new hostilities, and time to solicit new alliances; for which last purpose much art and much persuasive eloquence were employed.

But, the grand mystery of Indian politics was the flattery, the stratagem, and address employed in detaching other tribes from the alliance of their enemies. There could not be a stronger proof of the restless and turbulent nature of ambition than these artful negociations, the consequence of perpetual hostility, where one would think there

there was so little ground for quarrel; and that amongst a people who, individually, were by no means quarrelsome or covetous, and seemed in their private transactions with each other, impressed with a deep sense of moral rectitude; who reasoned soundly, reflected deeply, and acted in most cases consequentially. Property there was none, to afford a pretext for war, excepting a little possessed by the Mohawks, which they knew so well how to defend, that their boundaries were never violated;

"For their awe and their fear was upon all the nations round about."

Territory could not be the genuine subject of contention in these thinly peopled forests, where the ocean and the pole were the only limits of their otherwise boundless domain. The consequence attached to the authority of chiefs, who, as such, possessed no more property than others, and had not power to command a single vassal for their own personal benefit, was not so considerable as to be the object

of those wars. The chief privilege was, to be first in every dangerous enterprize. They were loved and honoured, but never, that I have heard of, traduced, envied, or removed from their painful pre-eminence.

The only way in which these wars can be accounted for is, first, from the general depravity of our nature, and from a singularly deep feeling of injury, and a high sense of national honour. They were not the hasty outbreakings of savage fury, but were commenced in the most solemn and deliberate manner; and not without a prelude of remonstrances from the aggrieved party, and attempts to soothe and conciliate from the other. This digression must not be considered as altogether from the purpose. To return to the Indians, whose history has its use in illustrating that of mankind: they now became fully sensible of the importance they derived from the increased wealth and undefended state of the settlement. They discovered too, that they held the balance

balance between the interior settlements of France and England, which, though still distant from each other, were daily approximating.

The Mohawks, though always brave and always faithful, felt a very allowable repugnance to expose the lives of their warriors in defence of those who made no effort to defend themselves; who were neither protected by the arms of their sovereign, nor by their own courage. They came down to hold a solemn congress, at which the heads of the Schuyler and Cuyler families assisted; and where it was agreed that, for the present, hostilities should be delayed, the hostile nations pacified by concessions and presents, and means adopted to put the settlement into a state of defence against future aggressions.

On all such occasions, when previously satisfied with regard to the justice of the grounds of quarrel, the Mohawks promised their hearty co-operation. This they were the readier to do, as their young brother Philip (for so they styled Colonel Schuyler)

Schuyler) offered not only to head such troops as might be raised for this purpose. but to engage his two brothers, who were well acquainted with the whole frontier territory, to serve on the same terms. This was a singular instance of public spirit in a young patriot; who was an entire stranger to the profession of arms; and whose sedate equanimity of character was adverse to every species of rashness or enthusiasm. Meantime the provisions of the above-mentioned treaty could not be carried into effect, till they were ratified by the assembly at New York, and approved by the governor. Of this there was little doubt; the difficulty was to raise, and pay the troops. In the interim, while steps were taking to legalize this project, in 1719, the marriage betwixt Col. Schuyler and his cousin took place under the happiest auspices.

CHAP. XVI.

Account of the three Brothers.

COLONEL Schuyler and his two brothers all possessed a superior degree of intellect, and uncommon external advantages: Peter, the only one remaining when I knew the family, was still a comely and dignified looking old gentleman; and I was told his brothers were at least equal to him in this respect. His youngest brother Jeremiah, who was much beloved for a disposition, frank, cheerful, and generous to excess, had previously married a lady from New York with whom he obtained some fortune: a thing then singular in that country. This lady, whom, in her declining years, I knew very well, was the daughter of a wealthy and distinguished family of French protestants. She was lively, sensible, and well informed.

Peter, the second, was married to a native

tive of Albany. She died early: but left behind two children, and the reputation of much worth, and great attention to her conjugal and maternal duties. All these relations lived with each other, and with the new married lady, in habits of the most cordial intimacy and perfect confidence. They seemed, indeed, actuated by one spirit: having in all things similar views and similar principles. Looking up to the colonel as the head of the family, whose worth and affluence reflected consequence upon them all, they never dreamt of envying either his superior manners, or his wife's attainments, which they looked upon as a benefit and ornament to the whole.

Soon after their marriage they paid a visit to New York, which they repeated once a year in the earlier period of their marriage, on account of their connection in that city, and the pleasing and intelligent society that was always to be met with there, both on account of its being the seat of goverment, and the residence of the commander-in-chief on the continent, who

who was then necessarily invested with considerable power and privileges, and had, as well as the governor for the time being, a petty court assembled round him. At a very early period a better style of manners, greater ease, frankness, and polish prevailed at New York, than in any of the neighbouring provinces. There was in particular, a Brigadier-General Hunter, of whom I have heard Mrs. Schuyler talk a great deal, as coinciding with her uncle and husband successively, in their plans either of defence or improvement. He, I think, was then governor: and was as acceptable to the Schuylers for his colloquial talents and friendly disposition, as estimable for his public spirit, and application to business, in which respects he was not equalled by any of his successors. In his circle the young couple were much distinguished. There were too among those leading families the Livingstons and Renselaers, friends connected with them both by blood and attachment. There was also another distinguished family to whom they were allied, and

with

with whom they lived in cordial intimacy; these were the De Lancys, of French descent, but, by subsequent intermarriages, blended with the Dutch inhabitants. Of the French protestants there were many then in New York, as will be hereafter explained; but as these conscientious exiles were persons allied in religion to the primitive settlers, and regular and industrious in their habits, they soon mingled with and became a part of that society, which was enlivened by their sprightly manners, and benefited by the useful arts they brought along with them. In this mixed society, which must have had attraction for young people of superior and, in some degree, cultivated intellect, this well-matched pair took great pleasure; and here, no doubt, was improved that liberality of mind and manners which so much distinguished them from the less enlightened inhabitants of their native city They were so much caressed in New York, and found so many charms in the intelligent and comparatively polished society of which they

they made a part that they had at first some thoughts of residing there. These, however, soon gave way to the persuasions of the old colonel, with whom they principally resided till his death, which happened in 1721, two years after. This union was productive of all that felicity which might be expected to result from entire congeniality not of sentiment only, but of original dispositions, attachments, and modes of living and thinking. He had been accustomed to consider her, as a child, with tender endearment. She had been used to look up to him, from infancy, as the model of manly excellence; and they drew knowledge and virtue from the same fountain, in the mind of that respectable parent whom they equally loved and revered.

CHAP. XVII.

The House and rural Œconomy of the Flats.—Birds and Insects.

I HAVE already sketched a general outline of that pleasant home to which the colonel was now about to bring his beloved.

Before I resume my narrative, I shall indulge myself in a still more minute account of the premises, the mode of living, &c. which will afford a more distinct idea of the country; all the wealthy and informed people of the settlement living on a smaller scale, pretty much in the same manner. Be it known, however, that the house I had so much delight in recollecting, had no pretension to grandeur, and very little to elegance. It was a large brick house of two or rather three stories (for there were excellent attics), besides a sunk story, finished with the exactest neatness. The

The lower floor had two spacious rooms, with large light closets; on the first there were three rooms, and in the upper one four. Through the middle of the house was a very wide passage, with opposite front and back doors, which in summer admitted a stream of air peculiarly grateful to the languid senses. It was furnished with chairs and pictures like a summer-parlour. Here the family usually sat in hot weather, when there were no ceremonious strangers.

Valuable furniture (though perhaps not very well chosen or assorted) was the favourite luxury of these people, and in all the houses I remember, except those of the brothers, who were every way more liberal, the mirrors, the paintings, the china, but above all, the state-bed, were considered as the family Teraphim, secretly worshipped, and only exhibited on very rare occasions. But in Colonel Schuyler's family the rooms were merely shut up to keep the flies, which in that country are an absolute nuisance, from spoiling

ing the furniture. Another motive was, that they might be pleasantly cool when opened for company. This house had also two appendages common to all those belonging to persons in easy circumstances there. One was a large portico at the door, with a few steps leading up to it, and floored like a room; it was open at the sides, and had seats all round. Above was either a slight wooden roof, painted like an awning, or a covering of lattice-work, over which a transplanted wild vine spread its luxuriant leaves and numerous clusters. The grapes though small, and rather too acid till sweetened by the frost, had a beautiful appearance. What gave an air of liberty and safety to these rustic porticos, which always produced in my mind a sensation of pleasure that I know not how to define, was the number of little birds domesticated there. For their accommodation there was a small shelf built within the portico where they nestled sacred from the touch of slaves and children, who were

were taught to regard them as the good genii of the place, not to be disturbed with impunity.

I do not recollect sparrows there, except the wood-sparrow. These little birds were of various kinds peculiar to the country ; but the one most frequent and familiar was a pretty little creature, of a bright cinnamon colour, called a wren, though faintly resembling the one to which we give that name, for it is more sprightly, and flies higher. Of these and other small birds, hundreds gave and received protection around this hospitable dwelling. The protection they received consisted merely in the privilege of being let alone. That which they bestowed was of more importance than any inhabitant of Britain can imagine. In these new countries, where man has scarce asserted his dominion, life swarms abundant on every side ; the insect population is numerous beyond belief, and the birds that feed on them are in proportion to their abundance. In process of time, as their sheltering woods

are

are cleared, all these recede before their masters, but not until his empire is fully established. Such minute aërial foes are more harassing than the terrible inhabitants of the forest, and more difficult to expel. It is only by protecting, and in some sort domesticating, these little winged allies, who attack them in their own element, that the conqueror of the lion and tamer of the elephant can hope to sleep in peace, or eat his meals unpolluted. While breakfasting or drinking tea in the airy portico, which was often the scene of these meals, birds were constantly gliding over the table with a butterfly, grasshopper, or cicada in their bills to feed their young, who were chirping above. These familiar inmates brushed by without ceremony, while the chimney swallow, the martin and other hirundines in countless numbers darted past in pursuit of this aërial population and the fields resounded with the ceaseless chirping of many insects unknown to our more temperate summers. These were now and then mingled with the animated

animated and not unpleasing cry of the tree-frog, a creature of that species, but of a light slender form, almost transparent, and of a lively green; it is dry to the touch, and has not the dank moisture of its aquatic relations; in short it is a pretty lively creature, with a singular and cheerful note. This loud and not unpleasing insect-chorus, with the swarms of gay butterflies in constant motion, enliven scenes to which the prevalence of woods, rising "shade above shade" on every side, would otherwise give a still and solemn aspect. Several objects, which with us are no small additions to the softened changes and endless charms of rural scenery, it must be confes-ed, are wanting there. No lark welcomes the sun that rises to gild the dark forest and gleaming lakes of America; no mellow thrush nor deep toned blackbird warbles through these aweful solitudes, or softens the balmy hour of twilight with

"The liquid language of the *groves*."

Twilight itself, the mild and shadowy hour, so soothing to every feeling, every pensive mind; that soft transition from day to night, so dear to peace, so due to meditation, is here scarce known, at least only known to have its shortness regretted. No daisy hastens to meet the spring, or embellishes the meads in summer: here no purple heath exhales its wholesome odour, or decks the arid waste with the chastened glow of its waving bells. No *bonny* broom, such as enliven the narrow vales of Scotland with its gaudy blow nor flow'ring furze with its golden blossoms, defying the cold blasts of early spring, animate their sandy wilds. There the white-blossomed sloe does not forerun the orchard's bloom, nor the pale primrose shelter its modest head beneath the tangled shrubs. Nature, bountiful yet not profuse, has assigned her various gifts to various climes, in such a manner, that none can claim a decided pre-eminence; and every country has peculiar charms, which endear it to the natives beyond any other.—I have been tempted

ed by lively recollections into a digression rather unwarrantable. To return:

At the back of the large house was a smaller and lower one, so joined to it s to make the form of a cross. There one or two lower and smaller rooms below, and the same number above, afforded a refuge to the family during the rigours of winter, when the spacious summer-rooms would have been intolerably cold, and the smoke of prodigious wood-fires would have sullied the elegantly clean furniture. Here, too, was a sunk story, where the kitchen was immediately below the eating parlour, and encreased the general warmth of the house. In summer the negroes inhabited slight outer kitchens, in which food was drest for the family. Those who wrought in the fields often had their simple dinner cooked without, and ate it under the shade of a great tree. One room, I should have said, in the greater house only, was opened for the reception of company; all the rest were bed-chambers for their accommoda-

tion; the domestic friends of the family occupying neat little bed-rooms in the attics, or in the winter-house. This house contained no drawing-room; that was an unheard-of luxury: the winter rooms had carpets; the lobby had oil-cloth painted in lozenges, to imitate blue and white marble. The best bed-room was hung with family portraits, some of which were admirably executed; and in the eating-room, which by the bye, was rarely used for that purpose, were some fine scripture paintings; that which made the greatest impression on my imagination, and seemed to be universally admired, was one of Esau coming to demand the anticipated blessing; the noble manly figure of the luckless hunter, and the anguish expressed in his comely, though strong featured countenance, I shall never forget. The house fronted the river, on the brink of which, under shades of elm and sycamore, ran the great road towards Saratoga, Stillwater, and the northern lakes; a little simple avenue of morella cherry trees, inclosed with a white rail,

rail, led to the road and river, not three hundred yards distant. Adjoining to this, on the south side, was an inclosure subdivided into three parts, of which the first was a small hay-field, opposite the south end of the house; the next, not so long, a garden; and the third, by far the largest, an orchard. These were surrounded by simple deal fences. Now let not the genius that presides over pleasure-grounds, nor any of his elegant votaries, revolt with disgust while I mention the unseemly ornaments which were exhibited on the stakes to which the deals of these same fences were bound. Truly they consisted of the skeleton heads of horses and cattle, in as great numbers as could be procured, stuck upon the above-said poles. This was not mere ornament either, but a most hospitable arrangement for the accommodation of the small familiar birds before described. The jaws are fixed on the pole, and the skull uppermost. The wren, on seeing a skull thus placed, never fails to enter by the orifice, which is too small to admit the

hand of an infant, lines the pericranium with small twigs and horse-hair, and there lays her eggs in full security. It is very amusing to see the little creature carelessly go out and in at this aperture, though you should be standing immediately beside it. Not satisfied with providing these singular asylums for their feathered friends, the negroes never fail to make a small round hole in the crown of every old hat they can lay their hands on, and nail it to the end of the kitchen, for the same purpose. You often see in such a one, at once, thirty or forty of these odd little domicils, with the inhabitants busily going out and in.

Besides all these salutary provisions for the domestic comfort of the birds, there was, in clearing the way for their first establishment, a tree always left in the middle of the back yard, for their sole emolument: this tree being purposely pollarded at Midsummer, when all the branches were full of sap. Wherever there had been a branch, the decay of the inside produced a hole; and every hole

was

was the habitation of a bird. These were of various kinds; some had a pleasing note, but, on the whole, their songsters are far inferior to ours. I rather dwell on these minutiæ, as they not only mark the peculiarities of the country, but convey very truly the image of a people not too refined for happiness, which, in the process of elegant luxury, is apt to die of disgust.

CHAP. XVIII.

Description of Colonel Schuyler's Barn, the Common, and its various Uses.

ADJOINING to the orchard was the most spacious barn I ever beheld; which I shall describe for the benefit of such of my readers as have never seen a building constructed on a plan so comprehensive. This barn, which, as will hereafter appear, answered many beneficial purposes besides those usually allotted for such edifices, was of a vast size, at least an hundred feet long, and sixty wide. The roof rose to a very great height in the midst, and sloped down till it came within ten feet of the ground, when the walls commenced; which like the whole of this vast fabric, were formed of wood. It was raised three feet from the ground, by beams resting on stone; and on these beams was laid, in the middle of the building, a very massive oak floor.

Before

Before the door was a large sill, sloping downwards, of the same materials. A breadth of about twelve feet on each side of this capacious building was divided off for cattle; on one side ran a manger, at the abovementioned distance from the wall, the whole length of the building, with a rack above it; on the other were stalls for the other cattle, running also the whole length of the building. The cattle and horses stood with their hinder parts to the wall, and their heads towards the threshing floor. There was a prodigious large box or open chest in one side, built up for holding the corn after it was thrashed; and the roof, which was very lofty and spacious, was supported by large cross beams: from one to the other of these was stretched a great number of long poles, so as to form a sort of open loft, on which the whole rich crop was laid up. The floor of those parts of the barn, which answered the purposes of a stable and cow-house, was made of thick slab deals, laid loosely over the supporting beams. And the mode of

cleaning those places was by turning the boards, and permitting the dung and litter to fall into the receptacles left open below for the purpose; thence in spring they were often driven down to the river, the soil, in its original state, not requiring the aid of manure. In the * front of this vast edifice there were prodigious folding-doors, and two others that opened behind.

Certainly never did cheerful rural toils wear a more exhilarating aspect than while the domestics were lodging the luxuriant harvest in this capacious repository. When speaking of the doors, I should have mentioned that they were made in the gable ends; those in the back equally large to correspond with those in the front; while on each side of the great doors were smaller ones, for the cattle and horses to enter. Whenever the corn or hay was reaped or cut, and ready for carrying home, which in that dry and warm climate happened in a very few days,

* By the front is meant the gable end, which contains the entrance.

a waggon

a waggon loaded with hay, for instance, was driven into the midst of this great barn; loaded also with numberless large grasshoppers, butterflies, and cicadas, who came along with the hay. From the top of the waggon, this was immediately forked up into the loft of the barn, in the midst of which was an open space left for the purpose; and then the unloaded waggon drove, in rustic state, out of the great door at the other end. In the mean time every member of the family witnessed, or assisted in this summary process; by which the building and thatching of stacks was at once saved; and the whole crop and cattle were thus compendiously lodged under one roof.

The cheerfulness of this animated scene was much heightened by the quick appearance, and vanishing of the swallows; which twittered among their high-built dwellings in the roof. Here, as in every other instance, the safety of these domestic friends was attended to; and an abode provided for them. In the front of this

barn were many holes, like those of a pidgeon-house, for the accommodation of the martin; that being the species to which this kind of home seems most congenial; and, in the inside of the barn, I have counted above fourscore at once. In the winter when the earth was buried deep in new-fallen snow, and no path fit for walking in was left, this barn was like a great gallery, well suited for that purpose; and furnished with pictures not unpleasing to a simple and contented mind. As you walked through this long area, looking up, you beheld the abundance of the year treasured above you; on one side the comely heads of your snorting steeds presented themselves, arranged in seemly order: on the other, your kine displayed their meeker visages, while the perspective, on either, was terminated by heifers and fillies no less interesting. In the midst your servants exercised the flail; and even, while they threshed out the straw, distributed it to the expectants on both sides; while

the

the " liberal handful" was occasionally thrown to the many-coloured poultry on the sill. Winter itself never made this abode of life and plenty cold or cheerless. Here you might walk and view all your subjects, and their means of support, at one glance; except, indeed, the sheep; for which a large and commodious building was erected very near the barn; the roof containing a loft large enough to hold hay sufficient for their winter's food.

Colonel Schuyler's barn was by far the largest I have ever seen: but all of them, in that country, were constructed on the same plan, furnished with the same accommodation, and presented the same cheering aspect. The orchard, as I formerly mentioned, was on the south side of the barn; on the north, a little farther back towards the wood, which formed a dark skreen behind this smiling prospect, there was an inclosure, in which the remains of the deceased members of the family were deposited. A field

of

of pretty large extent, adjoining to the house on that side, remained uncultivated, and uninclosed; over it were scattered a few large apple-trees of a peculiar kind: the fruit of which was never appropriated. This piece of level and productive land, so near the family mansion, and so adapted to various and useful purposes, was never occupied, but left open as a public benefit.

From the known liberality of this munificent family, all Indians, or new settlers, on their journey, whether they came by land or water, rested here. The military, in passing, always formed a camp on this common; and here the Indian wigwams were often planted; here all manner of garden-stuff, fruit, and milk, were plentifully distributed to wanderers of all descriptions. Every summer, for many years there was an encampment, either of regular or provincial troops, on this common; and often, when the troops proceeded northward, a little colony of helpless women

and

and children, belonging to them, was left in a great measure dependant on the compassion of these worthy patriarchs; for such the brothers might be justly called.

CHAP. XIX.

Military Preparations.—Disinterested Conduct, the surest Road to Popularity.—Fidelity of the Mohawks.

THE first year of the colonel's marriage was spent chiefly in New York, and in visits to the friends of his bride, and other relations. The following years they passed at home, surrounded daily by his brothers, with their families, and other relatives, with whom they maintained the most affectionate intercourse. The colonel, however, (as I have called him by anticipation had his mind engaged at this time, by public duties of the most urgent nature. He was a member of the colonial assembly; and, by a kind of hereditary right, was obliged to support that character of patriotism, courage, and public wisdom, which had so eminently distinguished his father. The father of Mrs. Schuyler, too,

too, had been long mayor of Albany; at that time an office of great importance; as including, within itself, the entire civil power exercised over the whole settlement as well as the town, and having a sort of patriarchial authority attached to it; for these people, though little acquainted with coercion, and by no means inclined to submit to it, had a profound reverence, as is generally the case in the infancy of society, for the families of their first leaders; whom they had looked up to merely as knowing them to possess superior worth, talent, and enterprise. In a society, as yet uncorrupted, the value of this rich inheritance can only be diminished by degradation of character in the representative of a family thus self-ennobled; especially if he be disinterested; this, though apparently a negative quality, being the one of all others which combined with the higher powers of mind most engages affection in private, and esteem in public life. This is a shield that blunts the shafts which envy never fails to level at the prosperous,

even

even in old establishments; where, from the very nature of things, a thousand obstructions rise in the upward path of merit; and a thousand temptations appear to mislead it from its direct road; and where the rays of opinion are refracted by so many prejudices of contending interests and factions. Still, if any charm can be found to fix that fleeting phantom popularity, this is it: It would be very honourable to human nature, if this could be attributed to the pure love of virtue; but, alas! multitudes are not made up of the wise, or of the virtuous. Yet the very selfishness of our nature inclines us to love and trust those who are not likely to desire any benefit from us, in return for those they confer. Other vices may be, if not social, in some degree gregarious: but even the avaricious hate avarice in all but themselves.

Thus, inheriting unstained integrity, unbounded popularity, a cool determined spirit, and ample possessions, no man had fairer pretensions to unlimited sway, in the sphere in which he moved, than the colonel;

colonel; but of this no man could be less desirous. He was too wise, and too happy to solicit authority; and yet too public-spirited, and too generous to decline it, when any good was to be done or any evil resisted, from which no private benefit resulted to himself.

Young as his wife was, and much as she valued the blessing of their union, and the pleasure of his society, she shewed a spirit worthy of a Roman matron, in willingly risking all her happiness, even in that early period of her marriage, consenting to his assuming a military command, and leading forth the provincial troops against the common enemy; who had now become more boldly dangerous than ever. Not content with secretly stimulating to acts of violence, the Indian tribes, who were their allies, and enemies to the Mohawks, the French Canadians, in violation of existing treaties, began to make incursions on the slightest pretexts. It was no common warfare in which the colonel was about to engage: but the duties of entering on vigorous measures, for

for the defence of the country, became not only obvious but urgent. No other person but he had influence enough to produce any coherence among the people of that district, or any determination, with their own arms and at their own cost, to attack the common enemy. As formerly observed, this had hitherto been trusted to the five confederate Mohawk nations; who, though still faithful to their old friends, had too much sagacity and observation, and indeed too strong a sense of native rectitude, to persuade their young warriors to go on venturing their lives in defence of those, who, from their increased power and numbers, were able to defend themselves with the aid of their allies. Add to this, that their possessions were on all sides daily extending; and that they, the Albanians, were carrying their trade for furs, &c. into the deepest recesses of the forests, and towards these great lakes which the Canadians were accustomed to consider as the boundaries of their dominions; and where they had Indians whom they were at great pains to attach

tach to themselves, and to inspire against us and our allies.

Colonel Schuyler's father had held the same rank in a provincial corps formerly: but in his time, there was a profound peace in the district he inhabited; though, from his resolute temper and knowledge of public business, and of the different Indian languages, he was selected to head a regiment raised in the Jerseys and the adjacent bounds, for the defence of the back frontiers of Pensylvania, New England, &c. Colonel Philip Schuyler was the first who raised a corps in the interior of the province of New York; this was not only done by his personal influence, but occasioned him a considerable expence, though the regiment was paid by the province, which also furnished arms and military stores; their service being, like that of all provincials, limited to the summer half-year.

The governor and chief commander came up to Albany to view and approve the preparations making for this interior war, and to meet the congress of Indian sachems;

sachems; who on that occasion, renewed their solemn league with their brother the great king. Colonel Schuyler, being then the person they most looked up to and confided in, was their proxy on this occasion in ratifying an engagement to which they ever adhered with singular fidelity. And mutual presents brightened the chain of amity; to use their own figurative language.

The common and the barn, at the Flats, were fully occupied, and the hospitable mansion, as was usual on all public occasions, overflowed. There the general, his aid-de-camps, the sachems and the principal officers of the colonel's regiment, were received; and those of the next class, who could not find room there, were accommodated by Peter and Jeremiah. On the common was an Indian encampment; and the barn and orchard were full of the provincials. All these last brought as usual their own food: but were supplied by this liberal family with every production of the garden, dairy, and orchard. While the colonel's

judgement

judgement was exercised in the necessary regulations for this untried warfare, Mrs. Schuyler, by the calm fortitude she displayed in this trying exigence, by the good sense and good breeding with which she accommodated her numerous and various guests, and by those judicious attentions to family concerns, which, producing order and regularity through every department without visible bustle and anxiety, enable the mistress of a family to add grace and ease to hospitality, shewed herself worthy of her distinguished lot.

CHAP. XX.

Account of a refractory Warrior, and of the Spirit which still pervaded the New England Provinces.

WHILE these preparations were going on, the general * was making every effort of the neighbourhood to urge those who had promised assistance, to come forward with their allotted quotas.

On the other side of the river, not very far from the Flats, lived a person whom I shall not name; though his conduct was so peculiar and characteristic of the times, that his anti-heroism is on that sole account worth mentioning. This person lived in great security and abundance, in a place like an earthly Paradise, and having had considerable wealth left to him scarcely knew an ungratified wish; the simple and domestic

* Shirley.

habits

of his life, had formed no desires beyond it, unless indeed it were the desire of being thought a brave man, which seemed his greatest ambition; he was strong, robust, and an excellent marksman; talked loud, looked fierce, and always expressed the utmost scorn and detestation of cowardice. The colonel applied to him, that his name, and the names of such adherents as he could bring, might be set down in the list of those who were to bring their quota, by a given time, for the general defence: with the request he complied. When the rendezvous came on, this talking warrior had changed his mind, and absolutely refused to appear; the general sent for him, and warmly expostulated on his breach of promise, the bad example, and the disarrangement of plan which it occasioned: the culprit spoke in a high tone, saying, very truly, "that the gene-
"ral was possessed of no legal means of
"coercion; that every one went or staid,
"as they chose; and that his change of
"opinion on that subject rendered him
"liable to no penalty whatever." Tired

of this sophistry, the enraged general had recourse to club law; and seizing a cudgel, belaboured this recreant knight most manfully; while several Indian sachems, and many of his own countrymen and friends, coolly stood by; for the colonel's noted common was the scene of his assault. Our poor neighbour (as he long after became) suffered this dreadful bastinado, unaided and unpitied; and this example, and the consequent contempt under which he laboured, (for he was ever after stiled Captain, and did not refuse the title,) was said to have an excellent effect in preventing such retrograde motions in subsequent campaigns*. The

* Above thirty years after, when the writer of these pages lived with her family at the Flats, the hero of this little tale used very frequently to visit her father, a veteran officer; and being a great talker, war and politics were his incessant topics. There was no campaign nor expedition proposed but what he censured and decided on; proposing methods of his own, by which they might have been much better conducted;

The provincial troops, aided by the faithful Mohawks, performed their duty with great spirit and perseverance. They were, indeed, very superior to the ignorant, obstinate, and mean-souled beings, who, in after-times, brought the very name of provincial troops into discredit; and were actuated by no single motive but that of avoiding the legal penalty then affixed to disobedience, and enjoying the pay and provisions allotted to them by the province, or the mother country, I cannot exactly say which. Afterwards, when the refuse of mankind were selected, like Falstaff's soldiers, and raised much in the same way, the New-York troops still

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conducted: in short Parolles with his drum was a mere type of our neighbour. Mrs. Schuyler's father long wondered how he took to him so kindly, and how a person of so much wealth and eloquence should dwell so obscurely, and shun all the duties of public life; till at length we discovered that he still loved to talk arrogantly of war and public affairs, and pitched upon him for a listener, as the only person he could suppose ignorant of his disgrace. Such is human nature! and so incurable is human vanity! !

maintained their respectability. This superiority might, without reproaching others, be in some measure accounted for from incidental causes. The four New England provinces were much earlier settled, sooner assumed the forms of a civil community, and lived within narrower bounds; they were more laborious; their fanaticism, which they brought from England in its utmost fervour, long continued its effervescence, where there were no pleasures, nor indeed lucrative pursuits, to detach their minds from it: and long after, that genuine spirit of piety, which, however narrowed and disfigured, was still sincere, had in a great measure evaporated; enough of the pride and rigour of bigotry remained to make them detest and despise the Indian tribes, as ignorant heathen savages. The tribes, indeed, who inhabited their district, had been so weakened by an unsuccessful warfare with the Mohawks, and were every way so inferior to them, that after the first establishment of the colony, and a few feeble attacks successfully repulsed,

pulsed, they were no longer enemies to be dreaded, or friends to be courted. This had an unhappy effect with regard to those provinces; and to the different relations in which they stood with respect to the Indians, some part of the striking difference in the moral and military character of these various establishments must be attributed.

The people of New England left the mother country, as banished from it by what they considered oppression; came over foaming with religious and political fury, and narrowly missed having the most artful and able of demagogues, Cromwell himself, for their leader and guide. They might be compared to lava, discharged by the fury of internal combustion, from the bosom of the commonwealth, while inflamed by contending elements. This lava, every one acquainted with the convulsions of nature must know, takes a long time to cool; and when at length it is cooled, turns to a substance hard and barren, that long resists the kindly influence of the elements,

its surface resumes the appearance of beauty and fertility. Such were almost literally the effects of political convulsions, aggravated by a fiery and intolerant zeal for their own mode of worship, on these self-righteous colonists.

These preliminary remarks on the diversity of character in these neighbouring provinces lead the way, in the mean time, to a discrimination, the effects of which have become interesting to the whole world.

CHAP. XXI.

Distinguishing Characteristics of the New York Colonists, to what owing.—Hugonots and *Palatines*, their Character.

BUT to return to the superior moral and military character of the New York populace.—It was in the first place owing to a well regulated piety, less concerned about forms than essentials: Next, to an influx of other than the original settlers, which tended to render the general system of opinion more liberal and tolerant. The French protestants, driven from their native land by intolerant bigotry, had lived at home excluded alike from public employments and fashionable society. Deprived of so many resources that were open to their fellow-subjects, and forced to seek comfort in piety and concord for many privations, self-command and frugality had been in a manner forced upon them; consequently they were not so

vain nor so volatile as to disgust their new associates; while their cheerful tempers, accommodating manners, and patience under adversity, were very prepossessing.

These additional inhabitants, being such as had suffered real and extreme hardships for conscience-sake from absolute tyranny and the most cruel intolerance, rejoiced in the free exercise of a pure and rational religion, and in the protection of mild and equitable laws, as the first of human blessings; which privation had so far taught them to value, that they thought no exertion too great to preserve them. I should have formerly mentioned, that, besides the French refugees already spoken of, during the earliest period of the establishment of the British sovereignty in this part of the continent, a great number of the protestants, whom the fury of war and persecution on religious accounts had driven from the Palatinate, (during the successful and desolating period of the wars carried on against that unhappy country by Lewis the Fourteenth,) had found refuge here. The

subdued

subdued and contented spirit, the simple and primitive manners, and frugal, industrious habits of these genuine sufferers for conscience-sake, made them an acquisition to any society which received them, and a most suitable leaven among the inhabitants of this province; who, devoted to the pursuits of agriculture and the Indian trade, which encouraged a wild romantic spirit of adventure, little relished those mechanical employments, or that petty yet necessary traffic in shops, &c. to which a part of every regulated society must needs devote their attention. These civic toils were left to those patient and industrious exiles, while the friendly intercourse with the original natives had strongly tinctured the first colonists with many of their habits and modes of thinking. Like them, they delighted in hunting, that image of war, which so generally, where it is the prevalent amusement, forms the body to athletic force and patient endurance, and the mind to daring intrepidity. The timorous deer or the feeble hare were not alone the objects of

their pursuit; nor could they in such an impenetrable country attempt to rival the fox in speed or subtlety. When they kept their "few sheep in the wilderness," the she-bear, jealous for her young, and the wolf, furious for prey, were to be encountered in their defence. From these allies, too, many who lived much among them had learnt that fearless adherence to truth, which exalts the mind to the noblest kind of resolution. The dangers to which they were exposed, of meeting wandering individuals, or parties of hostile Indians, while traversing the woods in their sporting or commercial adventures, and the necessity that sometimes occurred of defending their families by their own personal prowess, from the stolen irruptions of detached parties of those usually called the French Indians, had also given their minds a warlike bent; and as a boy was not uncommonly trusted at nine or ten years of age with a light fowling-piece, which he soon learned to use with great dexterity, few countries could produce such dexterous marksmen, or

persons

persons so well qualified for conquering those natural obstacles, of thick woods and swamps, which would at once baffle the most determined European. Not only were they strong of limb, swift of foot, and excellent marksmen—the hatchet was as familiar to them as the musket; and an amateur, who had never cut wood but for his diversion, could hew down a tree with a celerity that would astonish and abash a professed wood cutter in this country; in short, when means or arguments could be used powerful enough to collect a people so uncontrouled and so uncontroulable, and when headed by a leader whom they loved and trusted, so much as they did Colonel Schuyler, a well-armed body of New York provincials had nothing to dread but an ague or an ambuscade, to both of which they were much exposed on the banks of the lakes, and amidst the swampy forests they had to penetrate in pursuit of an enemy; of whom they might say with the Grecian hero, that "they wanted but daylight to conquer

" him." The first essay in arms of those provincials, under the auspices of their brave and generous leader, succeeded beyond their hopes. This is all I can recollect of it. Of its destination I only know that it was directed against some of those establishments which the French began to make within the British boundaries. The expedition terminated only with the season. The provincials brought home Canadian prisoners, who were kept on their parole in the houses of the three brothers, and became afterwards their friends; and the Five Nations brought home Indian prisoners, (most of whom they adopted,) and scalps enough to strike awe into the adverse nations, who were for a year or two afterwards pretty quiet.

CHAP. XXII.

A Child still-born.—Adoption of Children common in the Province.—Madame's *Visit to New York.*

MRS. SCHUYLER had contributed all in her power to forward this expedition; but was probably hurt, either by the fatigue of receiving so many friends, or the anxiety produced by parting with them under such circumstances; for soon after the colonel's departure she was delivered of a dead child, which event was followed by an alarming illness; but she wished the colonel to be kept ignorant of it, that he might give his undivided attention to the duties in which he was engaged. Providence, which doubtless had singled out this benevolent pair to be the parents of many who had no natural claim upon their affection, did not indulge them with any succeeding prospects of a family of their own. That privation, not a frequent one in the colony, did not chill the

the minds or narrow the hearts of people, who, from this circumstance, found themselves more at liberty to extend their beneficence, and enlarge that circle which embraced the objects of their love and care. This indeed was not singular during that reign of natural feeling which preceded the prevalence of artificial modes in this primitive district. The love of offspring is certainly one of the strongest desires that the uncorrupted mind forms to itself in a state of comparative innocence. Affecting indifference on this subject is the surest proof of a disposition either callous, or led by extreme vanity to pretend insensibility to the best feelings of nature.

To a tie so exquisitely tender, the pledge and bond of connubial union; to that bud of promised felicity, which always cheers with the fragrance of hope the noon-day of toil or care, and often supports with the rich cordial of filial love and watchful duty the evening of our decline, what mind can be indifferent! No wonder the joys of paternity should be highly

highly relished where they were so richly flavoured; where parents knew not what it was to find a rebel or a rival in a child; first, because they set the example of simplicity, of moderation, and of seeking their highest joys in domestic life; next, because they quietly expected and calmly welcomed the evening of life; and did not, by an absurd desire of being young too long, inspire their offspring with a premature ambition to occupy their place. What sacrifices have I not seen made to filial piety! How many respectable (though not young) maidens, who, without pretending a dislike to marriage, have rejected men whom their hearts approved, because they would not forsake, during her lifetime, a widowed mother, whose sole comfort they were!

For such children, who, that hopes to grow old, would not wish? A consideration which the more polished manners of Europe teach us to banish as far as possible from our minds. We have learned to check this natural sentiment, by finding other objects for those faculties of

our

minds, which nature intended to bless and benefit creatures born to love us, and to enlarge our affections by exciting them. If this stream, which so naturally inclines to flow downwards, happened to be checked in its course for want of the usual channel, these adepts in the science of happiness immediately formed a new one, and liked their canal as well as a river, because it was of their own making. To speak without a metaphor, whoever wanted a child adopted one; love produced love, and the grafted scion very often proved an ornament and defence to the supporting stock. But then the scion was generally artless and grateful. This is a part of the manners of my old friends which I always remember with delight; more particularly as it was the invariable custom to select the child of a friend who had a numerous family. The very animals are not devoid of that mixture of affection and sagacity, which suggests a mode of supplying this great desideratum. Next to that prince of cats, the famous cat of Whittington, I would place the cat recorded by Dr. White in his curious natural history,

history, who, when deprived of her young, sought a parcel of deserted leverets to suckle and to fondle. What an example!

The following year produced a suspension of hostilities between the Provinces and the Canadians. The colonel went to New York to attend his duty, being again chosen a member of the Colonial Assembly. Mrs. Schuyler accompanied him; and being improved both in mind and manners since her marriage, which, by giving her a more important part to act, had called forth her powers, she became the centre of a circle by no means inelegant or uninformed; for society was there more various and more polished than in any other part of the continent, both from the mixture of settlers, formerly described, and from its being situated in a province most frequently the seat of war, and consequently forming the head-quarters of the army, which, in point of the birth and education of the candidates for promotion, was on a very different footing from what it has been since. It was then a much narrower range, and the selection more

more attended to. Unless a man, by singular powers or talent, fought his way from the inferior rank, here was hardly an instance of a person getting even a subaltern's commission whose birth was not at least genteel, and who had not interest and alliances. There were not so many lucrative places under government. The wide field of adventure since opened in the East was scarcely known; a subaltern's pay was more adequate to the maintenance of a gentleman; and the noblest and most respected families had no other way of providing for such younger brothers, as were not bred to any learned profession, but by throwing them into the army. As to morals, this did not perhaps much mend the matter. These officers might in some instances be thoughtless, and even profligate, but they were seldom ignorant or low bred; and that rare character called a finished gentleman, was not unfrequently to be found among the higher ranks of them, who had added experience, reading, and reflection to their original stock of talents and attainments.

CHAP. XXIII.

Colonel Schuyler's partiality to the military children successive'y adopted.—Indian character falsely charged with idleness.

It so happened that a succession of officers, of the description mentioned in the preceding chapter, were to be ordered upon the service which I have been detailing; and whether in New York or at home, they always attached themselves particularly to this family, who, to the attractions of good breeding and easy intelligent conversation, added the power, which they pre-eminently possessed, of smoothing the way for their necessary intercourse with the independent and self-righted settlers, and of instructing them in many things essential to promote the success of the pursuits in which they were about to engage. It was one of aunt Schuyler's many singular merits, that, after acting for a time a distinguished part in this compara-

comparatively refined society, where few were so much admired and esteemed, she could return to the homely good sense and primitive manners of her fellow citizens at Albany, free from fastidiousness and disgust. Few indeed, without study or design, ever better understood the art of being happy, and making others so. Being gay is another sort of thing; gaiety, as the word is understood in society, is too often assumed, artificial, and produced by such an effort, that, in the midst of laughter, "the heart is indeed sad." Very different are the smiles that occasionally illume the placid countenance of cheerful tranquillity. They are the emanations of a heart at rest; in the enjoyment of that sunshine of the breast, which is set for ever to the restless votaries of mere amusement.

According to the laudable custom of the country they took home a child whose mother had died in giving her birth, and whose father was a relation of the colonel's. This child's name was either Schuyler or Cuyler, I do not exactly remember which;

which; but I remember her many years after as Mrs. Vander Poolen; when, as a comely contented looking matron, she used to pay her annual visit to her beloved benefactress, and send her ample presents of such rural dainties as her abode afforded. I have often heard her warm in her praises; saying how useful, how modest, and how affectionate she had been; and exulting in her comfortable settlement, and the plain worth, which made her a blessing to her family. From this time to her death, above fifty years afterwards, her house was never without one, but much oftener two children, whom this exemplary pair educated with parental solicitude and kindness. And whenever one of their protegées married out of the family, which was generally at a very early age, she carried with her a female slave, born and baptised in the house, and brought up with a thorough knowledge of her duty, and an habitual attachment to her mistress; besides the usual present of the furniture of a chamber, and a piece of plate, such as a tea-

tea-pot, tankard, or some such useful matter, which was more or less valuable as the protegée was more or less beloved: for though aunt Schuyler had great satisfaction from the characters and conduct of all her adopted, there were, no doubt, degrees of merit among them, of which she was better able to judge than if she had been their actual mother.

There was now an interval of peace, which gave these philanthropists more leisure to do good in their own way. They held a three-fold band of kindness in their hands, by which they led to the desirable purpose of mutual advantage; three very discordant elements, which were daily becoming more difficult to mingle and to rule; and which yet were the more dependent on each other for mutual comfort, from the very causes which tended to disunite them.

In the first place, the Indians began to assume that unfavourable and uncertain aspect, which it is the fate of man to wear in the first steps of his progress from that state

state, where he is at once warlike and social, having few wants, and being able, without constant labour or division of ranks, to supply them; where there is no distinction, save that attained by superior strength of mind and body; and where there are no laws, but those dictated by good sense, aided by experience, and enforced by affection. This state of life may be truly called the reign of the affections: the love of kindred and of country, ruling paramount, unrivalled by other passions, all others being made subservient to these. Vanity, indeed, was in some degree flattered; for people wore ornaments and were at no small pains to make them. Pride existed; but was differently modified from what we see it; every man was proud of the prowess and atchievements of his tribe collectively; of his personal virtues he was not proud, because we excel but by comparison; and he rarely saw instances of the opposite vices in his own nation, and looked on others with unqualified contempt.

When

When any public benefit was to be obtained or any public danger to be averted, their mutual efforts were all bent to one end; and no one knew what it was to withhold his utmost aid, nor indeed could in that stage of society have any motive for doing so. Hence, no mind being contracted by selfish cares, the community were but as one large family, who enjoyed or suffered together. We are accustomed to talk, in parrot phrase, of indolent savages; and to be sure in warm climates, and where the state of man is truly savage, that is to say, unsocial, void of virtue and void of comforts, he is certainly an indolent being; but that individual, in a cold climate, who has tasted the sweets of social life, who knows the wants that arise from it, who provides for his children in their helpless state, and with whom taste and ingenuity are so much improved, that his person is not only clothed with warm and seemly apparel, but decorated with numerous and not inelegant ornaments which from the scarcity and simplicity of his tools,

he

he has no ready nor easy mode of producing; when he has not only found out all these wants, which he has no means of supplying but by his individual strength, dexterity, and ingenuity, industry must be added, ere they can all be regularly gratified. Very active and industrious, in fact, the Indians were in their original state; and when we take it into consideration, that, beside these various occupations, together with their long journeys, wars, and constant huntings and fishing, their leisure was occupied not only by athletic but studious games, at which they played for days together with unheard-of eagerness and perseverance, it will appear they had very little of that lounging-time, for which we are so apt to give them credit. Or if a chief occasionally, after fatigue of which we can form no adequate idea, lay silent in the shade, those frisking Frenchmen who have given us most details concerning them, were too restless themselves to subdue their skipping spirits to the recollection, that a Mohawk had no study nor arm-chair

wherein to muse and cogitate, and that his schemes of patriotism, his plans of war, and his eloquent speeches, were all like the meditations of Jacques, formed " un-" der the greenwood tree." Neither could any man lounge on his sofa, while half a dozen others were employed in shearing the sheep, preparing the wool, weaving and making his coat, or in planting the flax for his future linen, and flaying the ox for his future shoes; were he to do all this himself, he would have little leisure for study or repose. And all this and more the Indian did under other names and forms. So that idleness, with its gloomy followers *ennui* and suicide, were unknown among this truly active people: yet that there is a higher state of society cannot be denied; nor can it be denied that the intermediate state is a painful and enfeebling one.

Man, in a state of nature, is taught by his more civilized brethren a thousand new wants before he learns to supply one. Thence barter takes place; which

which in the first stage of progression is universally fatal to the liberty, the spirit, and the comforts of an uncivilized people.

In the east, where the cradle of our infant nature was appointed, the clime was genial, its productions abundant, and its winters only sufficient to consume the surplus, and give a welcome variety to the seasons. There man was either a shepherd or a hunter, as his disposition led; and that perhaps in the same family. The meek spirit of Jacob delighted in tending his father's flocks; while the more daring and adventurous Esau traced the wilds of mount Seir, in pursuit both of the fiercer animals who waged war upon the fold, and the more timorous who administered to the luxury of the table.

The progress of civilization was here gradual and gentle; and the elegant arts seem to have gone hand in hand with the useful ones. We read of bracelets and ear-rings sent as tokens of love, and images highly valued and coveted; while even agriculture seemed in its infancy.

CHAP. XXIV.

Progress of Civilization in Europe.—Northern Nations instructed in the Arts of Life by those they had subdued.

POPULATION extending to the milder regions of Europe, brought civilization along with it; so that it is only among the savages (as we call our ancestors) of the North, that we can trace the intermediate state I have spoken of. Among them, one regular gradation seems to have taken place; they were first hunters, and then warriors. As they advanced in their knowledge of the arts of life, and acquired a little property, as much of pastoral pursuits as their rigorous climate would allow, without the aid of regular agriculture, mingled with their wandering habits. But, except in a few partial instances, from hunters they became conquerors: the warlike habits acquired from that mode of life raising their minds

minds above patient industry, and teaching them to despise the softer arts that embellish society. In fine, their usual progress to civilization was through the medium of conquest. The poet says,

> "With noble scorn the first fam'd Cato viewed,
> Rome learning arts from Greece, which she subdued."

The surly censor might have spared his scorn, for doubtless science, and the arts of peace, were by far the most valuable acquisitions resulting from their conquest of that polished and ingenious people. But when the savage hunters of the north became too numerous to subsist on their deer and fish, and too warlike to dread the conflict with troops more regularly armed, they rushed down, like a cataract, on their enfeebled and voluptuous neighbours; destroyed the monuments of art, and seemed for a time to change the very face of nature. Yet dreadful as were the devastations of this flood, let forth by divine vengeance to punish and to renovate, it had its use, in sweeping away the hoarded mass of cor-

ruption with which the dregs of mankind had polluted the earth. In was an awful, but a needful process; which, in some form or other, is always renewed when human degeneracy has reached its ultimatum. The destruction of these feeble beings, who, lost to every manly and virtuous sentiment, crawl about the rich property which they have not sense to use worthily, or spirit to defend manfully, may be compared to the effort nature makes to rid herself of the noxious brood of wasps and slugs cherished by successive mild winters. A dreadful frost comes; man suffers, and complains; his subject animals suffer more, and all his works are for a time suspended: but this salutary infliction purifies the air, meliorates the soil, and destroys millions of lurking enemies, which would otherwise have consumed the productions of the earth, and deformed the face of nature. In these barbarous irruptions, the monuments of art, statues, pictures, temples, and palaces, seem to be most lamented. From age to age the virtuosi

of

of every country have re-echoed to each other their feeble plaints over the lost works of art; as if that had been the heaviest sorrow in the general wreck; and as if the powers that produced them had ceased to exist. It is over the defaced image of the divine author, and not merely the mutilated resemblance of his creatures, that the wise and virtuous should lament! It is the necessity of these dreadful inflictions for purifying a polluted world, that ought to affect the mind with salutary horrour. We are told that in Rome there were as many statues as men: had all these lamented statues been preserved, would the world be much wiser or happier? a sufficient number remain as models to future statuaries, and memorials of departed art and genius. Wealth, directed by taste and liberality, may be much better employed in calling forth, by due encouragement, that genius which doubtless exists among our cotemporaries, than in paying exorbitantly the vender of fragments.

" Mind, mind alone, bear witness earth and Heaven!
The living fountains in itself contains
Of beauteous and sublime."

And what has mind achieved, that, in a favourable conjuncture, it may not again aspire to? The lost arts are ever the theme of classical lamentation; but the great and real evil was the loss of the virtues which protected them; of courage, fortitude, honour, and patriotism: in short of the whole manly character. This must be allowed, after the dreadful tempest of subversion was over, to have been in some degree restored in the days of chivalry: and it is equally certain that the victors learnt from the vanquished many of the arts that support life, and all those which embellish it. When their manners were softened by the aid of a mild and charitable religion, this blended people assumed that undefined power, derived from superior valour and superior wisdom, which has so far exalted Europe over all the regions

gions of the earth. Thus, where a bold and warlike people subdue a voluptuous and effeminate one, the result is, in due time, an improvement of national character. The conquerors learn from the conquered the arts which grace and polish life, while valour and fortitude, energy and simplicity are generated in the blended man, resulting from the mixture. In climes and circumstances similar to those of the primeval nations in the other hemisphere, the case has been very different. There, too, the hunter, by the same gradation, became a warrior; but first allured by the friendship which sought his protection; then repelled by the art that coveted and encroached on his territories; and lastly by the avarice which taught him new wants, and then took an undue advantage of them; he neither wished for our superfluities, nor envied our mode of life; neither did our encroachments much disturb him, since he receded into his trackless coverts as we approached from the coast. But though they scorned our refinements; and though our go-

vernment, and all the enlightened minds amongst us, dealt candidly and generously with all such as were not set on by our enemies to injure us, yet the blight of European vices, the mere consequence of private greediness and fraud, proved fatal to our very friends. As I formerly observed, the nature of the climate did not admit of the warrior's passing through the medium of a shepherd's life to the toils of agriculture. The climate though extremely warm in summer, was so severe in winter, and that winter was so long, that it required no little labour to secure the food for the animals which were to be maintained; and no small expence in that country to procure the implements necessary for the purposes of agriculture. In other countries, when a poor man has not wherewithal to begin farming, he serves another; and the reward of his toil enables him to set up for himself. No such resource was open to the Indians, had they even inclined to adopt our modes. No Indian ever served another, or received assistance from any one except his own family.

family. 'Tis inconceivable, too, what a different kind of exertion of strength it requires to cultivate the ground, and to endure the fatigues of the chace, long journeys, &c. To all that induces us to labour, they were indifferent. When a governor of New York was describing to an Indian the advantages that some one would derive from such and such possessions; "Why," said he, with evident surprise, "should any man desire to pos-"sess more than he uses!" More appeared to his untutored sense an incumbrance.

I have already observed how much happier they considered their manner of living than ours; yet their intercourse with us daily diminished their independence, their happiness, and even their numbers. In the new world this fatality has never failed to follow the introduction of European settlers; who, instead of civilizing and improving, slowly consume and waste; where they do not, like the Spaniards, absolutely destroy and exterminate the natives. The very nature of even our most friendly mode of dealing with them was

pernicious to their moral welfare; which, though too late, they well understood, and could as well explain. Untutored man, in beginning to depart from that life of exigencies, in which the superior acuteness of his senses, his fleetness, and dexterity in the chace, are his chief dependance, loses so much of all this before he can become accustomed to, or qualified for, our mode of procuring food by patient labour, that nothing can be conceived more enfeebled and forlorn than the state of the few detached families remaining of vanished tribes, who, having lost their energy, and even the wish to live in their own manner, were slowly and reluctantly beginning to adopt ours. It was like that suspension of life which takes place in the chrysalis of insects, while in their progress towards a new state of being. Alas! the indolence with which we reproach them, was merely the consequence of their commercial intercourse with us; and the fatal passion for strong liquors which resulted from it. As the fabled enchanter, by waving his magic wand,

chains

chains up at once the faculties of his opponents, and renders strength and courage useless; so the most wretched and sordid trader, possessed of this master-key to the appetites and passions of these hard-fated people, could disarm those he dealt with of all their resources, and render them dependent,—nay dependent on those they scorned and hated. The process was simple: first, the power of sending, by mimic thunder, an unseen death to a distant foe, which filled the softer inhabitants of the southern regions with so much terror, was here merely an object of desire and emulation; and so eagerly did they adopt the use of fire-arms, that they soon became less expert in using their own missile weapons. They could still throw the tomahawk with such an unerring aim, that, though it went circling through the air towards its object it never failed to reach it. But the arrows, on which they had formerly so much depended, were now considered merely as the weapons of boys, and only directed against birds.

Thus

Thus was one strong link forged in the chain of dependence; next, liquor became a necessary, and its fatal effects who can detail! But to make it still clearer, I have mentioned the passion for dress, in which all the pride and vanity of this people was centered. In former days this had the best effect, being a stimulus to industry. The provision requisite for making a splendid appearance at the winter meetings for hunting and the national congress, occupied the leisure hours of the whole summer. The beaver skins of the last year's hunting were to be accurately dressed, and sewed together, to form that mantle which was as much valued, and as necessary to their consequence, as the pelisse of sables is to that of an Eastern bashaw. A deer skin, or that of a bear, or beaver, had its stated price, and purchased from those unable to hunt, or past the age of severe toil, the wampum belt, the ornamented pouch, and embroidered sandals and other embellishments of their showy and fanciful costume. The boldest and most expert

hunter

hunter had most of these commodities to spare, and was therefore most splendidly arrayed. If he had a rival, it was he whose dexterous ingenuity in fabricating the materials of which his own dress was composed, enabled him to vie with the hero of the chace.

Hence superior elegance in dress was not, as with us, the distinction of the luxurious and effeminate, but the privilege and reward of superior courage and and industry; and became an object worthy of competition. Thus employed, and thus adorned, the sachem or his friends found little time to indulge the indolence we have been accustomed to impute to them.

Another arduous task remains uncalculated: before they became dependent on us for the means of destruction, much time was consumed in forming their weapons; in the construction of which no less patience and ingenuity were exercised than in that of their ornaments: and those too were highly embellished, and made with great labour out of flints, peb

bles,

bles, and shells. But all this system of employment was soon overturned by their late acquaintance with the insidious arts of Europe; to the use of whose manufactures they were insensibly drawn in, first by their passion for fire-arms, and finally, by their fatal appetite for liquor. To make this more clear, I shall insert a dialogue, such as, if not literally, at least in substance, might pass betwixt an Indian warrior and a trader.

CHAP. XXV.

Means by which the Independence of the Indians was first diminished.

Indian.—"BROTHER, I am come to trade with you: but I forewarn you to be more moderate in your demands than formerly."

Trader.—"Why, brother, are not my goods of equal value with those you had last year?"

Indian.—"Perhaps they may; but mine are more valuable because more scarce. The great spirit who has withheld from you strength and ability to provide food and clothing for yourselves, has given you cunning and art to make guns and provide scaura *; and by speaking smooth words to simple men, when they have swallowed madness, you have by little and little purchased their hunting grounds,

* Scaura is the Indian name for rum.

and

and made them corn lands. Thus the beavers grow more scarce, and deer fly father back; yet after I have reserved skins for my mantle, and the clothing of my wife, I will exchange the rest."

Trader—" Be it so, brother; I came not to wrong you, or take your furs against your will. It is true the beavers are few, and you go further for them. Come, brother, let us deal fair first, and smoke friendly afterwards. Your last gun cost fifty beaver-skins; you shall have this for forty; and you shall give marten and racoon skins in the same proportion for powder and shot."

Indian—" Well, brother, that is equal. Now for two silver bracelets, with long pendent ear-rings of the same, such as you sold to Cardarani in the sturgeon * month last year. How much will you demand?"

Trader.—" The skins of two deer

* The Indians appropriate a month to catch fish or animals, which is at that time the predominant object of pursuit; as the bear month, the beaver month, &c.

for

for the bracelets, and those of two fawns the ear-rings.

Indian.—" That is a great deal; but wampum grows scarce, and silver never rusts. Here are the skins.

Trader.—" Do you buy any more? Here are knives, hatchets, and beads of all colours."

Indian.—" I will have a knife and a hatchet; but must not take more: the rest of the skins will be little enough to clothe the women and children, and buy wampum. Your beads are of no value, no warrior who has slain a wolf will wear them *."

Trader.—" Here are many things good for you, which you have not skins to buy; here is a looking-glass, and here is a brass kettle, in which your woman may

* Indians have a great contempt, comparatively, for the beads we send; they consider them as only fit for those plebeians who cannot by their exertions win any better. They estimate them compared with their own wampum, as we do pearls compared with paste.

boil

boil her maize, her beans, and above all her maple sugar. Here are silver broaches, and here are pistols for the youths."

Indian.—" The skins I can spare will not purchase them.

Trader.—" Your will determines, brother; but next year you will want nothing but powder and shot, having already purchased your gun and ornaments. If you will purchase from me a blanket to wrap round you, a shirt and blue stroud for under garments to yourself and your woman; and the same for leggings, this will pass the time, and save you the great trouble of dressing the skins, making the thread, &c. for your clothing: which will give you more fishing and shooting time, in the sturgeon and bear months."

Indian.—" But the custom of my fathers!"

Trader.—" You will not break the custom of your fathers, by being thus clad for a single year. They did not refuse those things which were never offered to them."

Indian

Indian.—" For this year, brother, I will exchange my skins; in the next I shall provide apparel more befitting a warrior. One pack alone I will reserve to dress for a future occasion. The summer must not find a warrior idle."

The terms being adjusted and the bargain concluded, the trader thus shews his gratitude for liberal dealing,

Trader.—" Corlaer has forbid bringing scaura to steal away the wisdom of the warriors; but we white men are weak and cold; we bring kegs for ourselves, lest death arise from the swamps. We will not sell scaura; but you shall taste some of ours in return for the venison with which you have feasted us."

Indian.—" Brother, we will drink moderately."

A bottle was then given to the warrior by way of present; which he was advised to keep long; but found it irresistible. He soon returned with the reserved pack of skins, earnestly urging the trader to give him beads, silver, broaches, and

above

above all scaura, to their full amount, This, with much affected reluctance at parting with the private stock, was at last yielded. The warriors now, after giving loose for a while to frantic mirth, began the warwhoop, made the woods resound with infuriate howlings; and having exhausted their dear-bought draught, probably determined, in contempt of that probity which at all other times they rigidly observed, to plunder the instrument of their pernicious gratification, He, well aware of the consequences, took care to remove himself and his goods to some other place; and a renewal of the same scene ensued. Where, all this time, were the women, whose gentle counsels might have prevented these excesses? Alas! unrestrained by that delicacy which is certainly one of the best fruits of refinement, they shared in them, and sunk sooner under them. A long and deep sleep generally succeeded; from which they awoke in a state of dejection and chagrin, such as no Indian had ever experienced under any other circumstances. They felt as Mil-

ton

ton describes Adam and Eve to have done after their transgression. Exhausted, and forlorn, and stung with the consciousness of error and dependence, they had neither the means nor the desire of exercising their wonted summer occupations with spirit. Vacancy produced languor, and languor made them again wish for the potion which gave temporary cheerfulness*. They carried their fish to the next fort or habitation to barter for rum. This brought on days of frenzy, succeeded by torpor. When again roused by want to exertion, they saw the season passing without the usual provision; and by an effort of persevering industry, tried to make up for past negligence; and then worn out by exertion, sunk into supine indolence, till the approach of winter called them to hunt the bear; and the arrival of that, (their busy season,) urged on their distant excursions in pursuit of deer. Then they resumed

* From Peter Schuyler, brother to the colonel, I have heard many such details.

their

their wonted character, and became what they used to be; but conscious that acquired tastes and wants, which they had lost the habit of supplying themselves, would throw them again on the traders for clothing, &c. they were themselves out-straining every sinew to procure enough of peltry to answer their purpose, and to gratify their newly acquired appetites. Thus the energy, both of their characters and constitutions, was gradually undermined; and their numbers as effectually diminished, as if they had been wasted by war.

The small-pox was also so fatal to them, that whole tribes on the upper lakes have been entirely extinguished by it. Those people being in the habit of using all possible means of closing the pores of the skin, by painting and anointing themselves with bears' grease, to defend them against the extremity of cold, to which their manner of life exposed them; and not being habitually subject to any cutaneous disease, the small-pox

rarely

rarely rises upon them; from which it may be understood how little chance they had of recovering. All this I heard Aunt Schuyler relate, whose observations and reflections I merely detail.

CHAP. XXVI.

Peculiar Attractions of the Indian Mode of Life — Account of a Settler who resided some Time among them.

IN this wild liberty, in these habits of probity, mutual confidence, and constant variety, there was an undefinable charm, which, while it preserved their primitive manners, wrought in every one who dwelt for any time amongst them.

I have often heard my friend speak of an old man, who, being carried away in his infancy by some hostile tribe who had slain his parents, was rescued very soon after by a tribe of friendly Indians: they from motives of humanity, resolved to bring him up among themselves, that he might in their phrase, "learn to bend "the bow, and speak truth." When it was discovered some years after that he was still living, his relations reclaimed him; and the community wished him to return

return and inherit his father's lands, now become more considerable. The Indians were unwilling to part with their protegé; and he was still more reluctant to return. This was considered as a bad precedent; the early settlers having found it convenient in several things regarding hunting, food, &c. to assimilate in some degree with the Indians; and the young men occasionally, at that early period, joining their hunting and fishing parties. It was considered as a matter of serious import to reclaim this young alien; lest others should be lost to the community and to their religion by following his example. With difficulty they forced him home; where they never could have detained him, had they not carefully and gradually inculcated into his mind the truths of christianity. To those instructions even his Indian predilections taught him to listen; for it was the religion of his fathers, and venerable to him as such: still, however, his dislike of our manners was never entirely conquered, nor was his attach-

ment to his foster-fathers ever much diminished. He was possessed of a very sound intellect, and used to declaim with the most vehement eloquence against our crafty and insidious encroachments on our old friends. His abhorrence of the petty falsehoods to which custom has too well reconciled us, and of those little artifices which we all occasionally practise, rose to a height fully equal to that felt by Gulliver. Swift and this other misanthrope, though they lived at the same time, could not have had any intercourse, else one might have supposed the invectives which he has put into the mouth of Gulliver, were borrowed from this demi-savage: whose contempt and hatred of selfishness, meanness, and duplicity, were expressed in language worthy of the dean. Insomuch, that years after I had heard of this singular character, I thought, on reading Gulliver's asperities after returning from Hoynhnhmland, that I had met my old friend again. One really does meet with characters that fiction would seem too bold in pourtraying.

This

This original had an aversion to liquor, which amounted to abhorrence; being embittered by his regret at the mischiefs resulting from it to his old friends, and his rage at the traders for administering the means of depravity. He never could bear any seasoning to his food; and despised luxury in all its forms.

For all the growing evils I have been describing, there was only one remedy, which the sagacity of my friend and her other self soon discovered; and which their humanity as well as principle led them to try all possible means of administering. It was the pure light and genial influence of christianity alone that could cheer and ameliorate the state of these people, now, from a concurrence of circumstances scarcely to be avoided in the nature of things, deprived of the independence habitual to their own way of life without acquiring in its room any of those comforts which sweeten ours. By gradually and gently unfolding to them the views of a happy futurity, and the means by which depraved humanity was restored to

 a participation

a participation of that blessing; pride, revenge, and the indulgence of every excess of passion or appetite being restrained by the precepts of a religion ever powerful where it is sincere; their spirits would be brought down from the fierce pride which despises improvement, to adopt such of our modes as would enable them to incorporate in time with our society, and procure for themselves a comfortable subsistence, in a country no longer adapted to supply the wants of the houseless rangers of the forest.

The narrow policy of many looked coldly on this benevolent project. Hunters supplied the means of commerce, and warriors those of defence; and it was questionable whether a christian Indian would hunt or fight as well as formerly. This, however, had no power with those in whom christianity was any thing more than a name. There were already many christian Indians; and it was very encouraging, that not one, once converted, had ever forsaken the strict profession of the religion, or ever, in a single instance, abandoned

doned himself to the excesses so pernicious to the unconverted brethren. Never was the true spirit of christianity more exemplified than in those comparatively few converts; who about this time amounted to no more than two hundred But the tender care and example of the Schuylers co-operating with the incessant labours of a judicious and truly apostolic missionary, some years after greatly augmented their numbers in different parts of the continent: and to this day, the memory of David Brainard, the faithful labourer alluded to, is held in veneration in those districts that were blessed with his ministry. He did not confine it to one people or province, but travelled from place to place, to disseminate the gospel to new converts, and confirm and cherish the truth already planted. The first foundation of that church had, however, as I formerly mentioned, been laid long ago: and the examples of piety, probity, and benevolence set by the worthies at the Flats

and a few more, were a very necessary comment on the doctrines to which their assent was desired.

The great stumbling-block which the missionaries had to encounter with the Indians, (who, as far as their knowledge went, argued with great acuteness and logical precision,) was the small influence which our religion seemed to have over many of its professors. "Why," said they, "if the book of truth, that "shews the way to happiness, and bids "all men do justice, and love one "another, is given both to Corlaer and "Onnonthio*, does it not direct them "in the same way? Why does On-"nonthio worship, and Corlaer neglect, "the mother of the blessed one? And "why do the missionaries blame those "for worshipping things made with "hands, while the priests tell the

* Corlaer was the title given by them to the governor of New York: and was figuratively used for the governed, and Onnonthio for those of Canada in the same manner.

"praying

" the praying nation *, that Corlaer and
" his people have forsaken the worship of
" his forefathers: besides, how can peo-
" ple, who believe that God and good
" spirits view and take an interest in all
" their actions, cheat and dissemble, drink
" and fight, quarrel and backbite, if they
" believe the great fire burns for those
" who do such things. If we believed
" what you say, we should not exchange
" so much good for wickedness, to please
" an evil spirit, who would rejoice at our
" destruction.". . . . To this reasoning it was not easy to oppose any thing that could carry conviction to untutored people, who spoke from observation and the evidence of the senses; to which could only be opposed scripture texts, which avail not till they are believed; and abstract reasoning, extremely difficult to bring to the level of an unlearned understanding. Great labour and perseverance wrought on the minds of a few, who

* Praying nation was a name given to a village of Indians near Montreal, who professed the catholic faith.

felt conviction, as far as it is to be ascribed to human agency, flow from the affectionate persuasion of those whom they visibly beheld earnest for their eternal welfare; and when a few had thus yielded *, the peace and purity of their lives, and the sublime enjoyment they seemed to derive from the prospects their faith opened into futurity, was an inducement to others to follow the same path. This, abstractedly from religious considerations of endless futurity, is the true and only way to civilization; and to the blending together the old and new inha-

* Some of them have made such a proficiency in practical religion as ought to shame many of us, who boast the illuminating aids of our native christianity. Not one of these Indians has been concerned in those barbarous irruptions which deluged the frontiers of our south-western provinces with the blood of so many innocents, of every age and sex. At the commencement of these ravages, they flew into the settlements, and put themselves into the protection of government. The Indians no sooner became christians, than they openly professed their loyalty to king George; and therefore, to contribute to their conversion was as truly politic as it was nobly christian.

bitants

bitants of these regions. National pride, rooted prejudices, ferocity, and vindictive hatred, all yield before a change that new moulds the whole soul, and furnishes man with new fears and hopes, and new motives for action.

CHAP. XXVII.

Indians only to be attached by being converted.—The abortive Expedition of Mons. Barré.—Ironical Sketch of an Indian.

UPON the attachment the Indians had to our religion was grafted the strongest regard to our government, and the greatest fidelity to the treaties made with us. To illustrate the latter, I shall insert a specimen of Indian eloquence; not that I consider it by any means so rich, impressive, or sublime as many others that I could quote, but as it contains a figure of speech rarely to be met with among savage people, and supposed by us incompatible with the state of intellectual advancement to which they have attained. I mean a fine and well supported irony. About the year 1686, Mons. Barré, the commander of the French forces in Canada, made a kind of inroad, with a warlike design, into the the precincts claimed by our Mohawk allies;

lies; the march was tedious, the French fell sick, and many of their Indians deserted them. The wily commander, finding that he was unequal to the meditated attack, and that it would be unsafe to return through the lakes and woods, while in hourly danger of meeting enemies so justly provoked, sent to invite the Sachems to a friendly conference; and, when they met, asserted in an artful speech that he and his troops had come with the sole intention of settling old grievances, and smoking the calumet of peace with them. The Indians, not imposed on by such pretences, listened patiently to his speech, and then made the answer which the reader will find in the notes *. It is to be observed,

* " Onnonthio, I honour you; and all the warriors who are with me likewise honour you. Your interpreter has finished his speech, I begin mine. My words make haste to reach your ears; hearken to them, Yonnondio. You must have believed, when you left Quebec, that the sun had burnt up all the forests which made our country so inaccessible to the French; or that the lakes had so far overflowed their banks,

served that whoever they considered as the ruling person for the time being in Canada, they styled Onnonthio; while the governor of New York they always called Corlaer. Twice

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banks, that they had surrounded our castles, and that it was impossible for us to get out of them. Yes, Yonnondio, surely you have dreamt so; and the curiosity of seeing so great a wonder has brought you so far. Now you are undeceived, since I and the warriors here present are come to assure you, that the Hurons, Onondagoes, and Mohawks are yet alive. I thank you in their name for bringing back into their country the calumet, which your predecessor received from their hands. It was happy for you that you left under ground that murdering hatchet, which has been so often dyed with the blood of the French. Hear, Onnondio, I do not sleep; I have my eyes open; and the sun which enlightens me discovers to me a great captain, at the head of his soldiers, who speaks as if he were dreaming. He says that he only came to the lake to smoke out of the great calumet with the Five Nations; but Connaratego says that he sees the contrary; that it was to knock them on the head if sickness had not weakened the arms of the French. I see Onnonthio raving in a camp of sick men, whose lives the great spirit has saved by inflicting this sickness upon them. Hear, Onnonthio, our women had taken their

Twice in the year the new converts came to Albany to partake of the sacrament, before a place of worship was erected for them-

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their clubs; our children and old men had carried their bows and arrows into the heart of your camp, if our warriors had not disarmed them, and kept them back, when your messenger came to our castles. It is done, and I have said it. Hear Yonnondio, we plundered none of the French, but those who carried guns, powder, and ball, to the wolf and elk tribes, because those arms might have cost us our lives. Herein we follow the example of the Jesuits, who stave all the kegs of rum brought to the castles where they are, lest the drunken Indians should knock them on the head Our warriors have not beavers enough to pay for all those arms that they have taken; and our old men are not afraid of the war. This belt preserves my words. We carried the English into our lakes, to trade with the wolf and elk tribes, as the praying Indians brought the French to our castles, to carry on a trade, which the English say is theirs. We are born free. We neither depend upon Onnonthio nor Corlaer; we may go where we please. If your allies be your slaves, use them as such; command them to receive no other but your people. This belt preserves my words. We knocked the Connecticut Indians and their confederates on the head because they had cut down the trees of peace, which were the limits of our country. They have hunted beavers on our lands, contrary

themselves. They always spent the night, or oftener two nights, before their joining in this holy rite, at the Flats; which was their

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contrary to the customs of all Indians, for they have left none alive. They have killed both male and female. They brought the Sathanas into our country to take part with them, after they had formed ill designs against us; we have done less than they merited.

" Hear, once more, the words of the Five Nations. They say that when they buried the hatchet at Cardaragni, (in the presence of your predecessor,) in the middle of the fort *, they planted the tree of peace in the same place, to be there carefully preserved; that instead of an abode for soldiers, that fort might be a rendezvous for merchants; that in place of arms and ammunition, only peltry and goods should enter there.

" Hear, Yonnondio, take care for the future that so great number of soldiers as appear there do not choke the tree of peace, planted in so small a fort. It will be a great loss, after having so easily taken root, if you should stop its growth, and prevent its covering your country and ours with its branches. I assure you, in the name of the Five Nations, that our warriors shall dance to the calumet of peace under its leaves, and shall remain quiet on their mats; and that they shall never dig up the hatchet till Corlaer or On-

* Detroit.

nonthio,

their general rendezvous from different quarters. There they were cordially received by the three brothers, who always met together at this time to have a con-

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nonthio either jointly or separately, attack the country, which the great spirit hath given to our ancestors. This belt preserves my words, and this other the authority which the Five Nations have given me." Then, Garangula, addressing himself to Mons. de Maine, who understood his language, and interpreted, spoke thus: "Take, courage, friend, you have spirits; speak, explain my words, omit nothing. Tell all that your brethren and friends say to Onnonthio, your governor, by the mouth of Garangula,—who loves you, and desires you to accept of this present of beaver, and take part with me in my feast, to which I invite you. This present of beaver is sent to Yonnondio on the part of the Five Nations."

Mons. Barré returned to his fort much enraged at what he had heard; Garangula feasted the French officers, and then went home; and Mons. Barré set out on his way towards Montreal; and as soon as the general, with the few soldiers who remained in health, had embarked, the militia made their way to their own habitations without order or discipline. Thus a chargeable and fatiguing expedition, meant to strike the terror of the French name into the stubborn hearts of the Five Nations, ended in a scold between a French general and an old Indian.—*Colden's History of the Five Nations*, page 68.

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ference with them on subjects the most important to their present and future welfare. These devout Indians seemed all impressed with the same feelings, and moved by the same spirit. They were received with affectionate cordiality, and accommodated in a manner quite conformable to their habits, in the passage, porch, and offices; and so deeply impressed were they with a sense of the awful duty that brought them there, and of the rights of friendship and hospitality; and at this period so much were they become acquainted with our customs, that though two hundred communicants, followed by many of their children, were used to assemble on those occasions, the smallest instance of riot or impropriety was not known amongst them. They brought little presents of game, or of their curious handicrafts, and were liberally and kindly entertained by their good brother Philip, as they familiarly called him. In the evening they all went apart to secret prayer; and in the morning, by dawn of day, they assembled before

fore the portico; and their entertainers, who rose early to enjoy, unobserved, a view of their social devotion, beheld them with their mantles drawn over their heads, prostrate on the earth; offering praises and fervent supplications to their Maker. After some time spent in this manner, they arose, and seated in a circle on the ground, with their heads veiled as formerly, they sang an hymn, which it was delightful to hear, from the strength, richness, and sweet accord of their uncommonly fine voices; which every one that ever heard this sacred chorus, however indifferent to the purport of it, praised as incomparable. The voices of the female Indians are particularly sweet and powerful. I have often heard my friend dwell with singular pleasure on the recollection of those scenes, and of the conversations she and the colonel used to hold with the Indians, whom she described as possessed of very superior powers of understanding; and in their religious views and conversations, uniting the ardour of proselytes with the firm decision

cision and inflexible steadiness of their national character. It was on the return of those new christians to the Flats, after they had thus solemnly sealed their profession, that these wise regulations for preserving peace and good-will between the settlers (now become confident and careless from their numbers) and the Indians, jealous with reason of their ancient rites, were concluded.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Management of the Mohawks by the influence of the Christian Indians.

THE influence these converts had obtained over the minds of those most venerated for wisdom among their countrymen, was the medium through which this patriot family, in some degree, controled the opinions of that community at large, and kept them faithful to the British interests. Every two or three years there was a congress held, by deputies from New York, who generally spoke to the Indians by an interpreter; went through the form of delivering presents from their brother the great king, redressing petty grievances, smoking the calumet of peace, and delivering belts, the pledges of amity. But these were mere public forms; the real terms of this often renewed amity having been prevously digested by those who far better understood the relations

lations subsisting between the contracting parties, and the causes most likely to interrupt their union. Colonel Schuyler, though always ready to serve his country in exigencies, did not like to take upon himself any permanent responsibility, as a superintendant of Indian affairs, since it might have diminished that private influence which arose from the general veneration for his character and from a conviction that the concern he took was voluntary and impartial; neither did he choose to sacrifice that domestic peace and leisure, which he so well knew how to turn to the best account, being convinced that by his example and influence as a private gentleman, he had it in his power to do much good of a peculiar kind, which was incompatible with the weight and bustle of public affairs. These too would have interrupted that hospitality which, as they managed it, was productive of so many beneficial effects. I have already shewn how by prudent address and kind conciliation, this patriotic pair soothed and attached the Indians to the British

British interest. As the country grew more populous, and property more abundant and more secure, the face of society in this inland region began to change They whose quiet and orderly demeanour, devotion, and integrity did not much require the enforcement of laws, began to think themselves above them. To a deputed authority, the source of which lay beyond the Atlantic, they paid little deference; and from their neighbours of New Hampshire and Connecticut, who bordered on their frontiers, and served with them in the colonial wars, they had little to learn of loyalty or submission. These people they held in great contempt, both as soldiers and statesmen; and yet, from their frequent intercourse with those who talked of law and politics in their peculiar uncouth dialect incessantly, they insensibly adopted many of their notions. There is a certain point of stable happiness at which our imperfect nature merely seems to arrive; for the very materials of which it is formed contain the seeds of its destruction. This was the case

here.

here: that peaceful and desirable equality of conditions, from which so many comforts resulted, in process of time occasioned an aversion to superiors, to whom they were not accustomed, and an exaggerated jealousy of the power which was exercised for their own safety and comfort. Their manners unsophisticated, and their morals in a great measure uncorrupted, led them to regard with unjustifiable scorn and aversion those strangers who brought with them the manners of more polished, though less pure, communities. Proud of their haughty bluntness, which daily increased with their wealth and security, they began to consider respectful and polite behaviour as a degree of servility and duplicity; hence while they revolted at the power exercised over themselves, and very reluctantly made the exertions necessary for their own protection, they shewed every inclination to usurp the territories of their Indian allies; and to use to the very utmost the power they had acquired over them, by supply-their wants.

At the liberal table of Aunt Schuyler, there were always intelligence, just notions, and good breeding to be met with, both among the owners and their guests, many had their prejudices softened down, their minds enlarged, and their manners improved. There they met British officers of rank and merit, and persons in authority; and learnt that the former were not artificial coxcombs, nor the latter petty tyrants; as they would otherwise be very apt to imagine. Here they were accustomed to find, on the one hand, authority respected, and on the other to see the natural rights of man vindicated, and the utmost abhorrence expressed of all the sophistry by which the credulous were misled by the crafty, to have a code of morality for their treatment of heathens, different from that which directed them in their dealing with christians. Here a selection of the best and worthiest, of the different characters and classes we have been describing, met; and were taught, not only to tolerate, but to es-

teem each other: and it required the calm, temperate wisdom, and easy versatile manners of my friend to bring this about. It is when they are called to act in a new scene, and among people different from any they had known or imagined, that the folly of the wise and the weakness of the strong become discernible.

Many officers justly esteemed, possessed of capacity, learning, and much knowledge, both of the usages of the world, and the art of war, from the want of certain habitudes, which nothing but experience can teach, were disqualified for the warfare of the woods; and, from a secret contempt with which they regarded the blunt simplicity and plain appearance of the settlers, were not amenable to their advice on these points. They were not aware how much they were to depend upon them for the means of carrying on their operations; and by rude or negligent treatment so disgusted them, that the former withheld the horses, oxen, waggons, &c. which they were to be

be paid for, merely to shew their independence; well knowing that the dreaded and detested military power, even if coercive measures were resorted to, would have no chance for redress in their courts; and even the civil authority were cautious of doing any thing so unpopular as to decide in favour of the military. Thus, till properly instructed, those bewildered strangers were apt to do the thing of all others that annihilates a feeble authority; threaten where they could not strike, and forfeit respect where they could not enforce obedience: a failure of this kind clogged and enfeebled all their measures; for without the hearty co-operation of the inhabitants in furnishing pre-requisites, nothing could go on in a country without roads, or public vehicles, for the conveyance of their warlike stores. Another rock they were apt to run upon was, a neglect of the Indians, whom they neither sufficiently feared as enemies, nor valued as friends: till taught to do so by maturer judgements. Of

his, Braddock's defeat was an instance; he was brave, experienced, and versed in all military science; his confidence in which occasioned the destruction of himself and his army. He considered those counsels that warned him, how little manœuvres or numbers would avail " in the close prison of innumerous boughs," as the result of feeble caution; and marched his army to certain ruin, in the most brave and scientific manner imaginable. Upon certain occasions there is no knowledge so valuable as that of our own ignorance.

At the Flats, the self-righted boor learned civilization and subordination: the high bred and high spirited field officer gentleness, accommodation, and respect for unpolished worth and untaught valour. There, too, the shrewd and deeply reflecting Indian learnt to respect the British character, and to confide in that of the settlers; by seeing the best models of both, acting candidly towards each other, and generously to himself.

My friend was most particularly calculated

lated to be the coadjutor of her excellent consort, in thus subduing the spirits of different classes of people, strongly disposed to entertain a repulsive dislike of each other; and by leading them to the chastened enjoyment of the same social pleasures, under the auspices of those, whose good will they were all equally convinced of. She contrived to smooth down asperities, and assimilate those various characters, in a manner that could not be done by any other means.

Accustomed from childhood, both from the general state of society, and the enlarged minds of her particular associates, to take liberal views of every thing, and to look forward on all occasions to consequences, she steadily followed her wise and benevolent purposes, without being attracted by petty gratifications, or repelled by petty disgusts. Neither influenced by female vanity, nor female fastidiousness, she might very truly say of popularity, as Falstaff says of Worcester's rebellion, "it lay in her way and she found it:"

for no one ever took less pains to obtain it; and if the weight of solid usefulness and beneficence had not, as it never fails to do in the long run, forced approbation, her mode of conducting herself, though it might greatly endear her to her particular associates, was not conciliating to common minds. The fact was, that, though her benevolence extended through the whole circle of those to whom she was known, she had too many objects of importance in view to squander time upon imbecility and insignificance. Neither could she find leisure for the routine of ordinary visits, nor inclination for the insipidity of ordinary chit-chat.

If people of the description here alluded to could forward any plan advantageous to the public, or to any of those persons in whom she was particularly interested, she would treat them occasionally with much civility; for she had all the power of superior intellect without the pride of it; but could

could not submit to a perpetual sacrifice to forms and trifles. This, in her, was not only justifiable, but laudable; yet it is not mentioned as an example, because a case can very rarely occur, where the benefit resulting to others, from making one's own path, and forsaking the ordinary road, can be so essential; few ever can have a sphere of action so peculiar or so important as her's; and very few indeed have so sound a judgment to direct them in chusing, or so much fortitude to support them in pursuing, a way of their own.

In ordinary matters, where neither religion nor morality is concerned, it is much safer to trust to the common sense of mankind in general, than to our own particular fancy. Singularity of conduct or opinion is so often the result of vanity or affection, that whoever ventures upon it ought to be a person whose example is looked up to by others. A person too great to follow, ought be great enough to lead. But though her con-

versation was reserved for those she preferred, her advice, compassion, and good offices were always given where most needed.

CHAP. XXIX.

Madame's adopted Children.—Anecdote of Sister Susan.

YEARS passed away in this manner, varied only by the extension of protection and education, to a succession of nephews and nieces of the Colonel or Mrs. Schuyler. These they did not take from mere compassion, as all their relations were in easy circumstances; but influenced by various considerations, such as, in some cases, the death of the mother of the children, or perhaps the father; in others, where their nieces or nephews married very early, and lived in the houses of their respective parents, while their young family increased before they had a settled home; or in instances where, from the remote situations in which the parents lived, they could not so easily educate them. Indeed the difficulty of getting a suitable education

for children, whose parents were ambitious for their improvement, was great; and a family so well regulated as hers, and frequented by such society, was in itself an academy, both for the best morals and manners. When people have children born to them, they must submit to the ordinary lot of humanity: and if they have not the happiness of meeting with many good qualities to cultivate and rejoice over, there is nothing left for them but to exert themselves to the utmost, to reform and ameliorate what will admit of improvement. They must carefully weed and rear; if the soil produce a crop both feeble and redundant, affection will blind them to many defects; imperious duty will stimulate them, and hope, soothing, however deceitful, will support them. But when people have the privilege, as in this case, of chusing a child, they are fairly entitled to select the most promising. This selection, I understood always to have been left to Aunt Schuyler; and it appeared, by the event, to have been generally a happy one. Fifteen,

either

either nephews or nieces, or the children of such, who had been under her care, all lived to grow up and go out into the world; and all acted their parts so as to do credit to the instruction they had received, and the example they looked up to. Besides these, they had many whom they brought for two or three years to their house to reside; either because the family they came from was at the time crowded with younger children, or because they were at a time of life when a year or two spent in such society, as was there assembled, might not only form their manners, but give a bias to their future character.

About the year 1730. they brought home a nephew of the colonel's, whose father, having a large family, and, to the best of my recollection, having lost his wife, entirely gave over the boy to the protection of this relation. This boy was his uncle's god-son, and called Philip after him. He was a great favourite in the family; for, though apparently thoughtless and giddy, he had

a very good temper, and quick parts; and was upon the whole an ingenious, lively, and amusing child. He was a very great favourite, and continued to be so, in some measure, when he grew up.

There were other children in the house at the same time, whose names and relationship to my friends I do not remember; but none staid so long, or were so much talked of as this. There certainly never were people who received so much company, made so respectable a figure in life, and always kept so large a family about them, with so little tumult, or bustle, or indeed at so moderate an expence. What their income was I cannot say, but am sure it could not have been what we should think adequate to the good they did, and the hospitality and beneficence which they practised: for the rents of lands were then of so little value, that, though they possessed a considerable estate in another part of the country, only very moderate profits could result from it; but, indeed, from the simplicity of dress, &c. it was easier;

though

though in that respect, too, they preserved a kind of dignity, and went beyond others in the materials, though not the form of their apparel. Yet their principal expence was a most plentiful and well ordered table, quite in the English style; which was a kind of innovation: but so many strangers frequented the houses of the three brothers that it was necessary for them to accommodate themselves to the habits of their guests.

Peter being in his youth an extensive trader, had spent much time in Canada, among the noblesse there; and had served in the continental levies. He had a fine commanding figure, and quite the air and address of a gentleman, and was, when I knew him, an old man.

Intelligent and pleasing in a very high degree, Jeremiah had too much familiar kindness to be looked up to like his brother. Yet he also had a very good understanding, great frankness and affability, and was described by all who knew him, as the very soul of cordial friendship and warm benevolence. He married

married a polished and well educated person, whose parents (French protestants) were people of the first fashion in New York, and had given with her a good fortune, a thing very unusual in that country. They used, in the early years of their marriage, to pay a visit every winter to their connexions at New York, who passed part of every summer with them. This connexion, as well as that with the Flats, gave an air of polish, and a tincture of elegance to this family beyond others; and there were few so gay and social. This cheerfulness was supported by a large family, fourteen, I think, of very promising children. These, however, inheriting from their mother's family a delicate constitution, died one after another as they came to maturity: one only, a daughter, lived to be married; but died after having had one son and one daughter.

I saw the mother of this large family, after out-living her own children, and a still greater number of brothers and sisters,

sisters, who had all settled in life, prosperous and flourishing, when she married; I saw her a helpless bed-ridden invalid; without any remaining tie, but a sordid grasping son-in-law, and two grandchildren, brought up at a distance from her.

With her, too, I was a great favourite, because I listened with interest to her details of early happiness, and subsequent woes and privations; all of which she described to me with great animation, and the most pathetic eloquence. How much a patient listener, who has sympathy and interest to bestow on a tale of woe, will hear! and how affecting is the respect and compassion even of an artless child, to a heart that has felt the bitterness of neglect, and known what it was to pine in solitary sadness! Many a bleak day have I walked a mile to visit this blasted tree, which the storm of calamity had stripped of every leaf! and surely in the house of sorrow the heart is made better.

From

From this chronicle of past times, I derived much information respecting our good aunt; such as she would not have given me herself. The kindness of this generous sister-in-law was indeed the only light that shone on the declining days of sister Susan, as she was wont affectionately so call her. What a sad narrative would the detail of this poor woman's sorrows afford! which, however, she did not relate in a querulous manner; for her soul was subdued by affliction, and she did not "mourn as those that "have no hope." One instance of self-accusation I must record. She used to describe the family she left as being no less happy, united, and highly prosperous, than that into which she came: if, indeed, she could be said to leave it, going as she did for some months every year to her mother's house, whose darling she was, and who, being only fifteen years older than herself, was more like an elder sister, united by fond affection.

She went to New York to lie-in, at her mother's house, of her four or five first children; her mother at the same time having children as young as hers: and thus caressed at home by a fond husband, and received with exultation by the tenderest parents; young, gay, and fortunate, her removals were only variations of felicity; but, gratified in every wish, she knew not what sorrow was, nor how to receive the unwelcome stranger, when it arrived. At length she went down to her father's, as usual, to lie-in of her fourth child, which died when it was eight days old. She then screamed with agony, and told her mother, who tried by pious counsel to alleviate her grief, that she was the most miserable of human beings; for that no one was capable of loving their child so well as she did her's, and she could not think by what sin she had provoked this affliction: finally, she clasped the dead infant to her bosom, and was not, without the utmost difficulty, persuaded to part with it; while her frantic

grief

grief outraged all decorum. After this, said she, " I have seen my thirteen grown-up children, and my dear and excellent husband, all carried out of this house to the grave: I have lost the worthiest and most affectionate parents, brothers and sisters, such as few ever had; and however my heart might be pierced with sorrow, it was still more deeply pierced with a conviction of my own past impiety and ingratitude; and under all this affliction I wept silently and alone; and my outcry or lamentation was never heard by mortal." What a lesson was this?

This once much loved and much respected woman have I seen sitting in her bed, where she had been long confined, neglected by all those whom she had known in her better days, excepting aunt Schuyler, who unwieldy and unfit for visiting as she was, came out two or three times in the year to see her, and constantly sent her kindly tokens of remembrance. Had she been more careful to preserve her independence, and

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had she accommodated herself more to the plain manners of the people among whom she lived, she might in her adversity have met with more attention; but too conscious of her attainments, lively, regardless, and perhaps vain, and confident of being surrounded and admired by a band of kinsfolk, she was at no pains to conciliate others; she had, too, some expensive habits; which, when the tide of prosperity ebbed, could meet with little indulgence among a people who never entertained an idea of living beyond their circumstances.

Thus, even among those unpolished people, one might learn how severely the insolence of prosperity can be avenged on us, even by those we have despised and slighted; and who perhaps were very much our inferiors in every respect: though both humanity and good sense should prevent our mortifying them, by shewing ourselves sensible of that circumstance.

1751. This year was a fatal one to the families

families of the three brothers. Jeremiah, impatient of the uneasiness caused by a wen upon his neck, submitted to undergo an operation; which, being unskilfully performed, ended fatally, to the unspeakable grief of his brothers and of Aunt, who was particularly attached to him, and often dwelt on the recollection of his singularly compassionate disposition, the generous openness of his temper, and peculiar warmth of his affections. He indeed, was "taken away from the evil to come;" for of his large family, one after the other went off, in consequence of the weakness of their lungs, which withstood none of the ordinary diseases of small-pox, meazles, &c.: in a few years, there was not one remaining.

These were melancholy inroads on the peace of her, who might truly be said, to "watch and weep, and pray for all:" for nothing could exceed our good aunt's care and tenderness for this feeble family; who seemed flowers which merely bloomed to wither in their prime; for they

they were, as is often the case with those who inherit such disorders, beautiful, with quickness of comprehension, and abilities beyond their age.

CHAP. XXX.

Death of young Philip Schuyler.—Account of his Family, and of the *Society at the Flats.*

ANOTHER very heavy sorrow followed the death of Jeremiah: Peter, being the eldest brother, his son, as I formerly mentioned, was considered and educated as heir to the colonel. It was Peter's house that stood next to the colonel's; their dwellings being arranged according to their ages, the youth was not in the least estranged from his own family (who were half a mile off) by his residence in his uncle's, and was peculiarly endeared to all the families, (who regarded him as the future head of their house,) by his gentle manners and excellent qualities. With all these personal advantages, which distinguished that comely race, and which give grace and attraction to the unfolding blossoms of virtue, at an early age he was sent to a kind

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of college, then established in New Jersey; and he was there instructed, as far as in that place he could be. He soon formed an attachment to a lady still younger than himself, but so well brought up, and so respectably connected, that his friends were greatly pleased with the marriage, early as it was, and his father, with the highest satisfaction, received the young couple into the house. There they were the delight and ornament of the family, and lived amongst them as a common blessing. The first year of their marriage a daughter was born to them, whom they named Cornelia; and the next, a son, whom they called Peter. The following year, which was the same that deprived them of their brother Jeremiah, proved fatal to a great many children and young people, in consequence of an endemial disease, which every now and then used to appear in the country, and made great havoc. It was called the purple or spotted fever, and was probably of the putrid kind: be that as it may, it proved fatal to this interesting young couple. Peter, who had

had lost his wife but a short time before, was entirely overwhelmed by this stroke: a hardness of hearing, which had been gradually increasing before, deprived him of the consolations he might have derived from society. He encouraged his second son to marry; shut himself up for the most part in his own apartment; and became, in effect one of those lay brothers I have formerly described. Yet, when time had blunted the edge of this keen affliction, many years after, when we lived at the Flats, he used to visit us; and though he did not hear well, he conversed with great spirit, and was full of anecdote and information. Meanwhile, Madame did not sink under this calamity, though she felt it as much as her husband, but supported him; and exerted herself to extract consolation from performing the duties of a mother to the infant who was now become the representative of the family. Little Peter was accordingly brought home, and succeeded to all that care and affection of which his father had formerly been the object, while

Cornelia

Cornelia was taken home to Jersey, to the family of her maternal grandfather, who was a distinguished person in that district. There she was exceedingly well educated, became an elegant and very pleasing young woman, and was happily and most respectably married before I left the country, as was her brother very soon after. They are still living; and Peter, adhering to what might be called, eventually the safer side, during the war with the mother country, succeeded undisturbed to his uncle's inheritance.

All these new cares and sorrows did not in the least abate the hospitality, the popularity, or the public spirit of these truly great minds. Their dwelling, though in some measure become a house of mourning, was still the rendezvous of the wise and worthy, the refuge of the stranger, and an academy for deep and sound thinking, taste, intelligence, and moral beauty. There the plans for the public good were digested by the rulers of the province, who came, under the pretext of a summer excursion for mere amusement.

There the operations of the army, and the treaties of peace or alliance with various nations, were arranged; for there the legislators of the state, and the leaders of the war, were received, and mixed serious and important counsels with convivial cheerfulness, and domestic ease and familiarity. 'Tis not to be conceived how essential a point of union, a barrier against licence, and a focus, in which the rays of intellect and intelligence were concentrated, (such as existed in this family,) were to unite the jarring elements of which the community was composed, and to suggest to those who had power without experience, the means of mingling in due proportions its various materials for the public utility. Still, though the details of family-happiness were abridged, the spirit that produced it continued to exist, and to find new objects of interest. A mind elevated by the consciousness of its own powers, and enlarged by the habitual exercise of them, for the great purpose of promoting the good of others, yields to the pressure of calamity, but

but sinks not under it ; particularly when habituated, like these exalted characters, to look through the long vista of futurity towards the final accomplishment of the designs of Providence. Like a diligent gardener, who, when his promising young plants are blasted in full strength and beauty, though he feels extremely for their loss, does not sit down in idle chagrin, but redoubles his efforts to train up their successors to the same degree of excellence. Considering the large family she (Madame) always had about her, of which she was the guiding star as well as the informing soul, and the innocent cheerfulness which she encouraged and enjoyed ; considering, too, the number of interesting guests whom she received, and that complete union of minds, which made her enter so intimately into all the colonel's pursuits, it may be wondered how she found time for solid and improving reading ; because people, whose time is so much occupied in business and society, are apt to relax, with amusing trifles of the desultory kind, when they have odd half hours to bestow on literary amuse-

ments. But her strong and indefatigable mind never loosened its grasp; ever intent on the useful and the noble, she found little leisure for what are indeed the greatest objects of feeble characters. After the middle of life she went little out; her household, long since arranged by certain general rules, went regularly on, because every domestic knew exactly the duties of his or her place, and dreaded losing it, as the greatest possible misfortune. She had always with her some young person, " who was unto her as a daughter;" who was her friend and companion; and bred up in such a manner as to qualify her for being such; and one of whose duties it was to inspect the state of the household, and " report progress," with regard to the operations going on in the various departments. For no one better understood, or more justly estimated, the duties of housewifery. Thus, those young females, who had the happiness of being bred under her auspices, very soon became qualified to assist her, instead of encroaching much

on

on her time. The example and conversation of the family in which they lived, was to them a perpetual school for useful knowledge, and manners easy and dignified, though natural and artless. They were not indeed embellished; but then they were not deformed by affectation, pretensions, or defective imitation of fashionable models of manners. They were not indeed bred up " to dance, to dress, to roll the eye, or troll the tongue ;" yet they were not lectured into unnatural gravity, or frozen reserve. I have seen those of them who were lovely, gay, and animated, though, in the words of an old familiar lyric,

" Without disguise or art, like flowers that grace the wild,
" Their sweets they did impart whene'er they spoke or smil'd."

Two of those to whom this description particularly applies, still live; and still retain not only evident traces of beauty, but that unstudied grace and dignity which is the result of conscious worth and honour, habituated to receive the

tribute of general respect. This is the privilege of minds which are always in their own place, and neither stoop to solicit applause from their inferiors, nor strive to rise to a fancied equality with those whom nature or fortune have placed beyond them.

Aunt was a great manager of her time, and always contrived to create leisure hours for reading; for that kind of conversation, which is properly styled gossiping, she had the utmost contempt. Light superficial reading, such as merely fills a blank in time, and glides over the mind without leaving an impression, was little known there; for few books crossed the Atlantic but such as were worth carrying so far for their intrinsic value. She was too much accustomed to have her mind occupied with objects of real weight and importance, to give it up to frivolous pursuits of any kind. She began the morning with reading the Scriptures. They always breakfasted early, and dined two hours later than the primitive inhabitants, who always took that meal at twelve. This departure from the

ancient

ancient customs was necessary in this family, to accommodate the great numbers of British as well as strangers from New York, who were daily entertained at her liberal table. This arrangement gave her the advantage of a longer forenoon to dispose of. After breakfast she gave orders for the family details of the day, which, without a scrupulous attention to those minutiæ which fell more properly under the notice of her young friends, she always regulated in the most judicious manner, so as to prevent all appearance of hurry and confusion. There was such a rivalry among domestics, whose sole ambition was her favour, and who had been trained up from infancy, each to their several duties, that excellence in each department was the result both of habit and emulation; while her young protegées were early taught the value and importance of good housewifery, and were sedulous in their attention to little matters of decoration and elegance, which her mind was too much engrossed to attend to; so that her household affairs,

ever well regulated, went on in a mechanical kind of progress, that seemed to engage little of her attention, though her vigilant and overruling mind set every spring of action in motion. Having thus easily and speedily arranged the details of the day, she retired to read in her closet, where she generally remained till about eleven; when, being unequal to distant walks, the colonel and she, and some of her elder guests, passed some of the hotter hours among those embowering shades of her garden, in which she took great pleasure. Here was their Lyceum; here questions in religion and morality, too weighty for table talk, were leisurely and coolly discussed; and plans of policy and various utility arranged. From this retreat they adjourned to the portico; and while the colonel either retired to write, or went to give directions to his servants, she sat in this little tribunal, giving audience to new settlers, followers of the army left in hapless dependence, and others who wanted assistance or advice, or hoped she would intercede with the

colonel

colonel for something more peculiarly in his way, he having great influence with the colonial government. At the usual hour her dinner-party assembled, which was generally a large one; and here I must digress from the detail of the day to observe, that, looking up as I always did to Madame with admiring veneration, and having always heard her mentioned with unqualified applause, I look often back to think what defects or faults she could possibly have to rank with the sons and daughters of imperfection, inhabiting this transitory scene of existence, well knowing, from subsequent observation of life, that error is the unavoidable portion of humanity. Yet of this truism, to which every one will readily subscribe, I can recollect no proof in my friend's conduct, unless the luxury of her table might be produced to confirm it. Yet this, after all, was but comparative luxury. There was more choice and selection, and perhaps more abundance at her table, than at those of the other primitive inhabitants, yet how simple were her repasts

compared with those which the luxury of the higher ranks in this country offer to provoke the sated appetite. Her dinner-party generally consisted of some of her intimate friends or near relations; her adopted children, who were inmates for the time being; and strangers, sometimes invited, merely as friendless travellers, on the score of hospitality, but often welcomed for some time as stationary visitors, on account of worth or talents, that gave value to their society; and, lastly, military guests, selected with some discrimination on account of the young friends, whom they wished not only to protect, but cultivate by an improving association. Conversation here was always rational, generally instructive, and often cheerful. The afternoon frequently brought with it a new set of guests. Tea was always drank early here; and, as I have formerly observed, was attended with so many petty luxuries of pastry, confectionery, &c. that it might well be accounted a meal by those whose early and frugal dinners had so long gone by. In

Albany

Albany it was customary, after the heat of the day was past, for the young people to go in parties of three or four, in open carriages, to drink tea at an hour or two's drive from town. The receiving and entertaining this sort of company generally was the province of the younger part of the family; and of those many came, in summer evenings, to the Flats, when tea, which was very early, was over. The young people, and those who were older, took their different walks while Madame sat in her portico, engaged in what might comparatively be called light reading, essays, biography, poetry, &c. till the younger party set out on their return home, and her domestic friends rejoined her in her portico, where, in warm evenings, a slight repast was sometimes brought; but they more frequently shared the last and most truly social meal within.

Winter made little difference in her mode of occupying her time. She then always retired to her closet to read at stated periods.

In conversation she certainly took de-

light, and peculiarly excelled; yet did not in the least engross it, or seem to dictate. On the contrary, her thirst for knowledge was such, and she possessed such a peculiar talent for discovering the point of utility in all things, that from every one's discourse she extracted some information, on which the light of her mind was thrown in such a direction, as made it turn to account. Whenever she laid down her book she took up her knitting, which neither occupied her eyes nor attention, while it kept her fingers engaged; thus setting an example of humble diligence to her young protegées. In this employment she had a kind of tender satisfaction, as little children, reared in the family, were the only objects of her care in this respect. For those, she constantly provided a supply of hosiery till they were seven years old; and, after that, transferred her attention to some younger favourite. In her earlier days, when her beloved colonel could share the gaieties of society, I have been told they both had a high relish for innocent mirth, and every species of humorous

morous pleasantry; but in my time there was a chastened gravity in his discourse, which, however, did not repulse innocent cheerfulness, though it dashed all manner of levity, and that flippancy which great familiarity sometimes encourages amongst young people, who live much together. Had Madame, with the same good sense, the same high principle, and general benevolence towards young people, lived in society, such as is to be met with in Britain, the principle upon which she acted would have led her to encourage in such society more gaiety and freedom of manners. As the regulated forms of life in Britain set bounds to the ease that accompanies good breeding, and refinement, generally diffused, supplies the place of native delicacy, where that is wanting, a certain decent freedom is both safe and allowable. But, amid the simplicity of primitive manners, those bounds are not so well defined. Under these circumstances, mirth is a romp, and humour a buffoon; and both must be kept within strict limits.

CHAP. XXXI.

Family Details.

THE hospitalities of this family were so far beyond their apparent income, that all strangers were astonished at them. To account for this, it must be observed that, in the first place, there was perhaps scarce an instance of a family possessing such uncommonly well-trained, active, and diligent slaves, as that which I describe. The set that were staid servants when they married, had some of them died off by the time I knew the family; but the principal roots from whence the many branches, then flourishing, sprung, yet remained. These were two women, who had come originally from Africa while very young: they were most excellent servants, and the mothers or grandmothers of the whole set, except one white-woolled negro-man; who, in my time,

time, sat by the chimney, and made shoes for all the rest. The great pride and happiness of these sable matrons were, to bring up their children to dexterity, diligence, and obedience; Diana being determined that Maria's children should not excel hers in any quality, which was a recommendation to favour; and Maria equally resolved that her brood, in the race of excellence, should out-strip Diana's. Never was a more fervent competition. That of Phillis and Brunetta, in the Spectator, was a trifle to it: and it was extremely difficult to decide on their respective merits; for though Maria's son Prince cut down wood with more dexterity and dispatch than any one in the province, the mighty Cæsar, son of Diana, cut down wheat, and threshed it, better than he. His sister Betty, who, to her misfortune, was a beauty of her kind, and possessed wit equal to her beauty, was the best sempstress and laundress, by far, I have ever known; and the plain unpretending Rachel, sister to Prince, wife to Titus, alias Tyte, and head cook, dressed

dressed dinners that might have pleased Apicius. I record my old humble friends by their real names, because they allowedly stood at the head of their own class; and distinction of every kind should be respected. Besides, when the curtain drops, or indeed long before it falls, 'tis, perhaps, more creditable to have excelled in the lowest parts, than to have fallen miserably short in the higher. Of the inferior personages, in this dark drama I have been characterizing, it would be tedious to tell: suffice it, that besides filling up all the lower departments of the household, and cultivating to the highest advantage a most extensive farm, there was a thorough-bred carpenter and shoe-maker, and an universal genius who made canoes, nets, and paddles; shod horses, mended implements of husbandry, managed the fishing, in itself no small department, reared hemp and tobacco, and spun both; made cyder, and tended wild horses, as they call them; which was his province to manage and to break. For every branch

of

of the domestic œconomy, there was a person allotted; educated for the purpose; and this society was kept immaculate, in the same way that the quakers preserve the rectitude of theirs; and, indeed, in the only way that any community can be preserved from corruption; when a member shewed symptoms of degeneracy, he was immediately expelled, or in other words more suitable to this case, sold. Among the domestics, there was such a rapid increase, in consequence of their marrying very early, and living comfortably without care, that if they had not been detached off with the young people brought up in the house, they would have swarmed like an over-stocked hive.

The prevention of crimes was so much attended to in this well regulated family, that there was very little punishment necessary; none that I ever heard of, but such as Diana and Maria inflicted on their progeny, with a view to prevent the dreaded sentence of expulsion; notwithstanding the

the petty rivalry between the branches of of the two original stocks. Inter-marriages between the Montagues and Capulets of the kitchen, which frequently took place, and the habit of living together under the same mild, though regular government, produced a general cordiality and affection among all the members of the family, who were truly ruled by the law of love; and even those who occasionally differed about trifles, had an unconscious attachment to each other, which shewed itself on all emergencies. Treated themselves with care and gentleness, they were careful, and kind, with regard to the only inferiors and dependants they had, the domestic animals. The superior personages in the family, had always some good property to mention, or good saying to repeat, of those whom they cherished into attachment, and exalted into intelligence; while they, in their turn, improved the sagacity of their subject animals, by caressing and talking to them. Let no one laugh at this; for whenever

man

man is at ease and unsophisticated, where his native humanity is not extinguished by want, or chilled by oppression, it overflows to inferior beings; and improves their instincts, to a degree incredible to those who have not witnessed it. In all mountainous countries, where man is more free, more genuine, and more divided into little societies widely detached from others, and much attached to each other, this cordiality of sentiment, this overflow of good will takes place. The poet says,

> " Humble love, and not proud reason,
> Keeps the door of heaven."

This question must be left for divines to determine; but sure am I that humble love, and not proud reason, keeps the door of earthly happiness, as far as it is attainable. I am not going, like the admirable Crichton, to make an oration in praise of ignorance; but a very high degree of refinement certainly produces a quickness of discernment, a niggard approbation, and

and a fastidiousness of taste, that find a thousand repulsive and disgusting qualities mingled with those that excite our admiration, and would (were we less critical) produce affection. Alas! that the tree should so literally impart the knowledge of good and evil; much evil and little good. It is time to return from this excursion, to the point from which I set out.

The Princes and Cæsars of the Flats had as much to tell of the sagacity and attachments of the animals, as their mistress related of their own. Numberless anecdotes that delighted me in the last century, I would recount, but fear I should not find my audience of such easy belief as I was, nor so convinced of the integrity of my informers. One circumstance I must mention, because I well know it to be true. The colonel had a horse which he rode occasionally, but which oftener travelled with Mrs. Schuyler in an open carriage. At particular times, when bringing home hay or corn they yoked Wolf, for so he was called, in a waggon; an indignity to which, for

for a while, he unwillingly submitted. At length, knowing resistance was in vain, he had recourse to stratagem; and whenever he saw Tyte marshalling his cavalry for service, he swam over to the island; the umbrageous and tangled border of which I formerly mentioned: there he fed with fearless impunity till he saw the boat approach; whenever that happened he plunged into the thicket, and led his followers such a chase, that they were glad to give up the pursuit. When he saw from his retreat that the work was over, and the fields bare, he very coolly returned. Being, by this time, rather old, and a favourite, the colonel allowed him to be indulged in his dislike to drudgery. The mind which is at ease, neither stung by remorse, nor goaded by ambition or other turbulent passions, nor worn with anxiety for the supply of daily wants, nor sunk into languor by stupid idleness, forms attachments and amusements, to which those exalted by culture would not stoop, and those crushed by want and care could not rise. Of this

nature

nature was the attachment to the tame animals, which the domestics appropriated to themselves, and to the little fanciful gardens where they raised herbs or plants of difficult culture, to sell and give to their friends. Each negro was indulged with his racoon, his great squirrel, or musk rat; or perhaps his beaver, which he tamed and attached to himself, by daily feeding and caressing him in the farm-yard. One was sure about all such houses to find these animals, in whom their masters took the highest pleasure. All these small features of human nature must not be despised for their minuteness.—To a good mind they afford consolation.

Science, directed by virtue, is a godlike enlargement of the powers of human nature; and exalted rank is so necessary a finish to the fabric of society, and so invariable a result from its regular establishment, that in respecting those, whom the divine wisdom has set above us, we perform a duty such as we expect from our own inferiors; this helps to support the general

ral order of society. But so very few in proportion to the whole can be enlightened by science, or exalted by situation, that a good mind draws comfort from discovering even the petty enjoyments permitted to those in the state which we consider most abject and depressed.

CHAP. XXXII.

Resource of Madame.—Provincial Customs.

IT may appear extraordinary, with so moderate an income, as could in those days be derived even from a considerable estate in that country, how Madame found means to support that liberal hospitality, which they constantly exercised. I know the utmost they could derive from their lands, and it was not much: some money they had, but nothing adequate to the dignity, simple as it was, of their style of living, and the very large family they always drew around them. But with regard to the plenty, one might almost call it luxury, of their table, it was supplied from a variety of sources, that rendered it less expensive than could be imagined. Indians, grateful for the numerous benefits they were daily receiving from them, were constantly bringing the smaller game, and, in winter and spring, loads of venison.

Little

Little money passed from one hand to another in the country; but there was constantly, as there always is in primitive abodes, before the age of calculation begins, a kindly commerce of presents. The people of New York and Rhode-Island, several of whom were wont to pass a part of the summer with the colonel's family, were loaded with all the productions of the farm and river. When they went home, they again never failed, at the season, to send a large supply of oysters, and all other shell-fish, which at New York abounded; besides great quantities of tropical fruit, which, from the short run between Jamaica and New York, were there almost as plenty and cheap, as in their native soil. Their farm yielded them abundantly all that in general agriculture can supply; and the young relatives who grew up about the house, were rarely a day without bringing some provision from the wood or the stream. The negroes, whose business lay frequently in the woods, never willingly went there or any where else, without a gun, and

rarely came back empty-handed. Presents of wine, then a very usual thing to send to friends to whom you wished to shew a mark of gratitude, came very often, possibly from the friends of the young people who were reared and instructed in that house of benediction; as there were no duties paid for the entrance of any commodity there, wine, rum, and sugar, were cheaper than can easily be imagined; and in cyder they abounded.

The negroes of the three truly united brothers, not having home employment in winter, after preparing fuel used to cut down trees, and carry them to an adjoining saw-mill, where, in a very short time, they made great quantities of planks, staves, &c. which is usually styled lumber, for the West-India market. And when a ship-load of their flour, lumber, and salted provisions were accumulated, some relative, for their behoof, freighted a vessel, and went out to the West-Indies with it. In this stygian schooner, the departure of which was always looked

ed

ed forward to with unspeakable horror, all the stubborn or otherwise unmanageable slaves were embarked, to be sold by way of punishment. This produced such salutary terror, that preparing the lading of this fatal vessel generally operated as a temporary reform at least. When its cargo was discharged in the West Indies, it took in a lading of wine, rum, sugar, coffee, chocolate, and all other West-India productions, paying for whatever fell short of the value, and returning to Albany, sold the surplus to their friends, after reserving to themselves a most liberal supply of all the articles so imported. Thus they had not only a profusion of all the requisites for good housekeeping, but had it in their power to do what was not unusual there in wealthy families, though none carried it so far as these worthies.

In process of time, as people multiplied, when a man had eight or ten children to settle in life, and these marrying early, and all their families increasing

fast, though they always were considered as equals, and each kept a neat house and decent outside, yet it might be that some of them were far less successful than others, in their various efforts to support their families; but these deficiencies were supplied in a quiet and delicate way, by presents of every thing a family required, sent from all their connexions and acquaintances; which, where there was a continual interchange of sausages, pigs, roasting pieces, &c. from one house to another, excited little attention: but when Aunt's West-India cargo arrived, all the families of this description within her reach, had an ample boon sent them of her new supply.

The same liberal spirit animated her sister, a very excellent person, married to Cornelius Cuyler, then mayor of Albany; who had been a most successful Indian trader in his youth, and had acquired large possessions, and carried on an extensive commercial intercourse with the traders of that day, bringing from Europe

Europe quantities of those goods that best suited them, and sending back their peltry in exchange; he was not only wealthy, but hospitable, intelligent, and liberal-minded, as appeared by his attachment to the army, which was, in those days, the distinguishing feature of those who in knowledge and candour were beyond others. His wife had the same considerate and prudent generosity, which ever directed the humanity of her sister; though, having a large family, she could not carry it to so great an extent.

If this maternal friend of their mutual relatives could be said to have a preference among her own, and her husband's relations, it was certainly to this family. The eldest son Philip, who bore her husband's name, was on that and other accounts, a particular favourite; and was, I think, as much with them in childhood, as his attention to his education, which was certainly the best the province could afford, would permit.

Having become distinguished through

all the northern provinces, the common people, and the inferior class of the military, had learned from the Canadians who frequented her house, to call Aunt, Madame Schuyler; but by one or other of these appellations she was universally known; and a kindly custom prevailed, for those who were received into any degree of intimacy in her family, to address her as their aunt, though not in the least related. This was done oftener to her than others, because she excited more respect and affection; but it had in some degree the sanction of custom. The Albanians were sure to call each other aunt or cousin, as far as the most strained construction would carry those relations. To strangers they were indeed very shy at first, but extremely kind; when they not only proved themselves estimable, but by a condescension to their customs and acquiring a smattering of their language, ceased to be strangers, then they were in a manner adopted: for the first seal of cordial intimacy among the young people was to call each other

other cousin; and thus in an hour of playful or tender intimacy I have known it more than once begin: "I think "you like me well enough, and I am "sure I like you very well; come, "why should not we be cousins? I am "sure I should like very well to be your "cousin, for I have no cousins of my "own where I can reach them. Well, "then you shall be my cousin for ever "and ever." In this uncouth language, and in this artless manner, were these leagues of amity commenced. Such an intimacy was never formed unless the object of it were a kind of favourite with the parents, who immediately commenced uncle and aunt to the new cousin. This, however, was a high privilege, only to be kept by fidelity and good conduct. If you exposed your new cousin's faults, or repeated her minutest secrets, or by any other breach of constancy lost favour, it was as bad as refusing a challenge; you were coldly received every where, and could never regain your footing in society.

Aunt's

Aunt's title, however, became current every where, and was most completely confirmed in the year 1750 when she gave with more than common solemnity a kind of annual feast, at which the colonel's two brothers, and sisters, Aunt's sister, Mrs. Cornelius Cuyler, and their families, with several other young people related to them assembled. It was not given on a stated day, but at the time when most of these kindred could be collected. This year I have often heard my good friend commemorate, as that on which their family stock of happiness felt the first diminution. The feast was made, and attended by all the collateral branches, consisting of fifty-two, who had a claim by marriage or descent, to call the colonel and my friend uncle and aunt, besides their parents. Among these were reckoned three or four grandchildren of their brothers. At this grand gala there could be no less than sixty persons, but many of them were doomed to meet no more; for the next year the small-pox, always peculiarly mortal here, (where it was improperly treated in the

the old manner,) broke out with great virulence, and raged like a plague; but none of those relatives whom Mrs. Schuyler had domesticated suffered by it; and the skill which she had acquired from the communications of the military surgeons who were wont to frequent her house, enabled her to administer advice and assistance, which essentially benefited many of the patients in whom she was particularly interested; though even her influence could not prevail on people to have recourse to inoculation. The patriarchal feast of the former year, and the humane exertions of this, made the colonel and his consort appear so much in the light of public benefactors, that all the young regarded them with a kind of filial reverence, and the addition of uncle and aunt was become confirmed and universal, and was considered as an honorary distinction. The ravages which the small-pox made this year among their Mohawk friends, was a source of deep concern to these revered philanthropists; but this was an evil not to be remedied

by

by any ordinary means. These people, as has been already remarked, being accustomed from early childhood to anoint themselves with bear's grease, to repel the innumerable tribes of noxious insects in summer, and to exclude the extreme cold in winter, their pores are so completely shut up, that the small-pox does not rise upon them, nor have they much chance of recovery from any acute disease; but, excepting the fatal infection already mentioned, they are not subject to any other than the rheumatism, unless in very rare instances. The ravages of disease this year operated on their population as a blow, which it never recovered; and they considered the small-pox in a physical, and the use of strong liquors in a moral sense, as two plagues which we had introduced among them, for which our arts, our friendship, and even our religion, were a very inadequate recompense.

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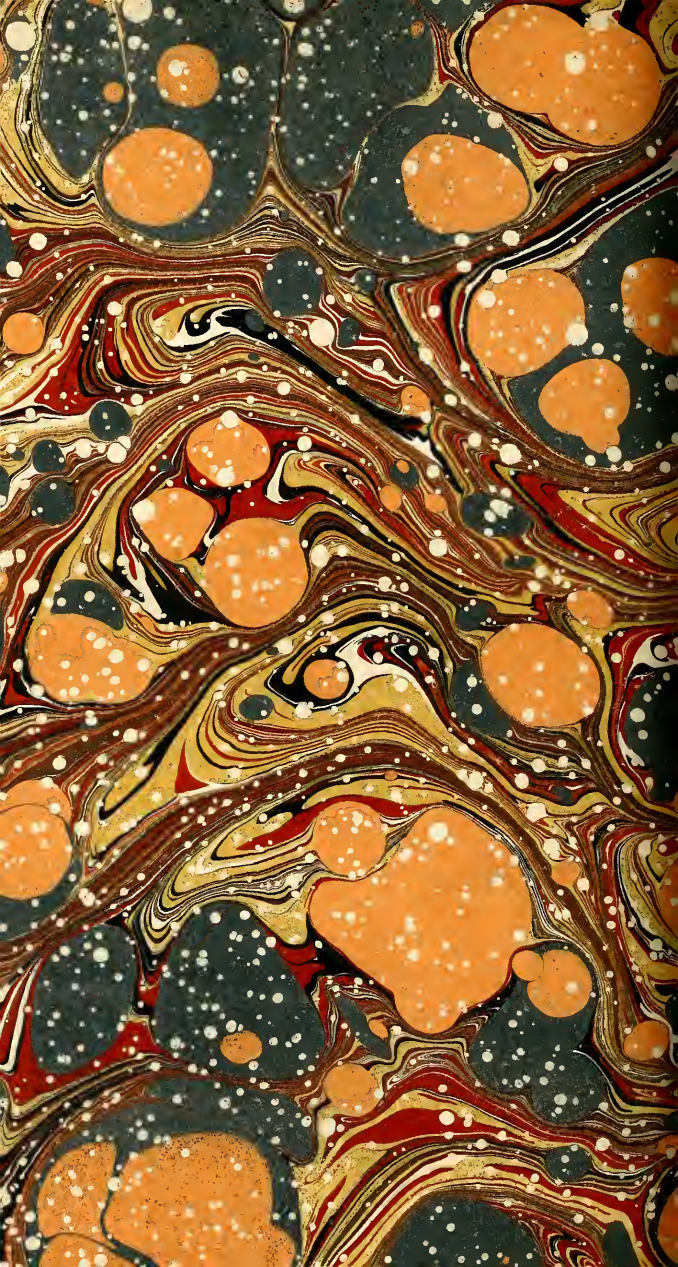

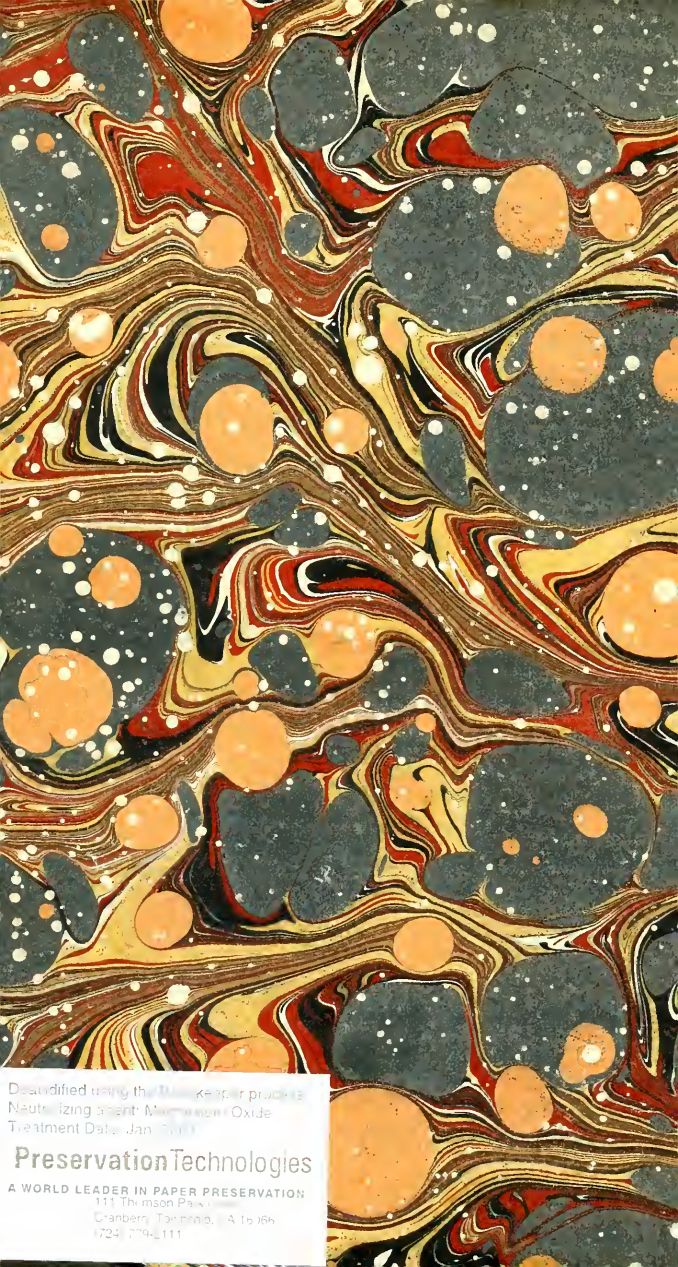

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